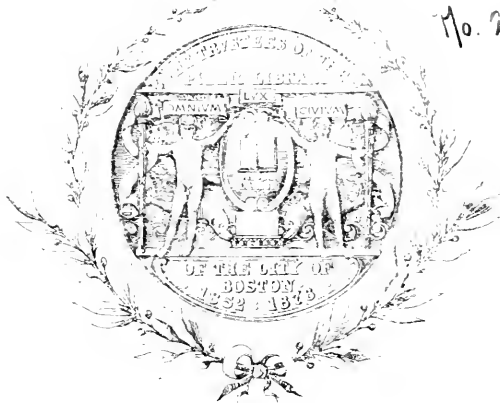




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Dept. of Labor

to put in





# White House Conference on Children in a Democracy

*Washington, D. C.*

*January 18-20, 1940*

## Final Report



# White House Conference on Children in a Democracy

*Washington, D. C.*

*January 18-20, 1940*

**Final Report**

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## **Publications of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy Issued by the Children's Bureau**

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## Letter of Transmittal

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,  
CHILDREN'S BUREAU,  
*Washington, December 17, 1941.*

MADAM: There is transmitted herewith the Final Report of the Report Committee of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, which was held in Washington, January 18-20, 1940. The work of this Conference has already had important results in focusing the attention of the Nation upon the needs of children and the services which every community should make available to assure their health, education, recreation, and social well-being.

Since the Conference met in January 1940 a National Citizens Committee under the leadership of Marshall Field has been actively at work, and State follow-up committees have been organized in 26 States and in Puerto Rico. In 18 of these States the Governor appointed the members of the White House Conference Committee or in some other way gave official recognition to the plan. State conferences have been held in 16 States for the purpose of creating public understanding of the objectives of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy and for a discussion of the State program. A considerable proportion of the States have done notable work in bringing together public and private agencies concerned with all aspects of child welfare. This work assumes added importance during the stresses of the war period, and will be particularly significant in planning and organizing more complete programs at the termination of the war.

Respectfully submitted.

KATHARINE F. LENROOT, *Chief.*

HON. FRANCES PERKINS,  
*Secretary of Labor.*



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## Foreword

THIS final report of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy is issued by the Report Committee of the Conference pursuant to a resolution adopted by the Conference at its final session and in accordance with instructions from its Planning Committee. The text of this report was prepared for the Committee by its research staff after conferences with its officers. It has been given careful study by the members of the Committee, and many suggestions from them were embodied in later revisions.

This report is a much fuller statement of facts and conditions about many phases of child life in America than space and time permitted in the more formal statements and the recommendations based thereon, which were issued as the General Report of the Conference in May 1940. It could not be expected that the same unanimity and identity of point of view on the part of the Report Committee would be reflected in the present document of some 400 pages as was possible in the earlier report, each phase of which was considered, revised in many instances, and finally unanimously adopted by the entire Conference in session at Washington in January 1940. This final report does represent, however, to the utmost extent practicable, a consensus of opinion of the 27 members of the Committee, all of whom have had opportunity to examine it in detail in the various stages of its preparation and to offer suggestions for revision. The chief responsibility for accuracy of the factual material, as well as for the organization, style, and wording of the report, must necessarily rest upon the staff who prepared it.

The recommendations reproduced in Part IV of this report are those which were approved and adopted by the Conference itself after protracted discussion and revision at its meeting on January 19, 1940, and were published in the General Report of the Conference. These remain the complete and only statement of conclusions adopted by the Conference.

The text of this report, as distinct from the recommendations, is based to a considerable extent on a series of special studies by the research staff, covering the several fields of interest to the Conference. These studies had been submitted for discussion to group meetings of the Conference members and contained most of the supporting evidence for the recommendations of the Conference.

In its present form, however, this report is by no means merely a revision of the earlier topical reports. It is, in fact, a new, unique, and highly successful effort to present a unified picture of the life and growth of America, as related to its children, for which credit must go to Philip Klein, research director of the Conference. In preparing the text of this report,

he has brought to the material at the disposal of the Conference his own wide knowledge of the social sciences, a fresh spirit and point of view, a comprehensive perspective, and a scheme of integration that has succeeded in carrying out the intention of the Conference to present an organic, unified statement of the problems of "children in a democracy." This report is an outstanding contribution to the series of White House Conference Reports, that the general reader may find as interesting and stimulating as will the specialist in child health or welfare. It comprises 14 chapters, in four major parts. The first part, in 5 chapters, presents the background of child life in America over the years. The second part, in 2 chapters, deals with economic factors in American life as they affect the well-being of children. The third part, in 7 chapters, presents the various services, public and private, which the American people have developed for the betterment of the lives of children. The fourth part reproduces, with some initial comment, the Recommendations of the fourth of the decennial White House Conferences relating to children—the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy.

The process of drafting the present report, of passing it on to the members of the Committee for suggestions and revisions, of collecting additional information and bringing important facts up to date has taken up a good part of the time that has elapsed since the meeting of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy and the publication of its General Report, based on the sessions in Washington. The final sessions of the Conference were called in January 1940, instead of April, because of the already threatening storm clouds in Europe. Since then the European debacle has occurred and not only has spread its destructive waves throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa, but also has finally fully involved the nations of the Western Hemisphere. In 1940 the United States inaugurated a far-reaching national-defense program, which has resulted in wide changes from month to month—even from week to week and from day to day—in the fields of employment, public assistance, education, health, housing, and other aspects of national life that were included in the studies of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy. These changes continue with an ever accelerated tempo. It has seemed to the Report Committee neither practical nor wise to attempt continuous revision of the factual data in this report to keep pace with the increasingly rapid changes in the American scene. Therefore the factual foundations of this report relate mainly to the year 1940. In essence, however, and as to present and future objectives, this report is, in the opinion of the Report Committee, even more timely and practicable than in the days when we were looking forward to the possibility of war but were not yet immersed in its maelstrom. The philosophy of this report and its proposals are fully applicable alike to the war period and to the period of post-war readjustment. The fundamental needs of children change but little in war or in peace, and in war each child is, in an even more vital sense, an invaluable asset of the



Nation. Therefore the need is even greater, in such crucial periods, to give increased attention to the welfare of the Nation's children, to conserve the gains already made, and to extend to all the care and protection they need.

The safety of our democracy depends in large measure upon the welfare of our children; and an unswerving faith in democracy has become even clearer and more compelling, and has a more universal and understanding acceptance by the American people, than ever before.

HOMER FOLKS,  
*Chairman of the Report Committee.*



## Research Director's Letter of Transmittal to Chairman of Report Committee

THE HONORABLE HOMER FOLKS,  
Chairman of the Report Committee,  
White House Conference on Children in a Democracy.

DEAR MR. FOLKS: I beg to submit herewith the draft of the Final Report of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy to the Report Committee. There is no need for me to repeat the acknowledgments which you so graciously made in your preface to the General Report of the Conference, January 19, 1940, to members of the research staff, officials and chiefs of the various Federal Bureaus, and to the members of the Report Committee, consultants, and many other persons and committees who had given their help.

I do wish to make particular mention and to record my indebtedness in the preparation of the Final Report to Miss Lilian Brandt who has carried a considerable share of the burden in the expansion, reorganization, and rewriting involved. I wish also to extend my grateful acknowledgment to you as Chairman of the Report Committee and to Miss Katharine F. Lenroot as Executive Secretary of the Conference for the continued encouragement and the exceedingly helpful critical guidance which alone made possible completion of this difficult assignment for the Committee.

Sincerely yours.

PHILIP KLEIN,  
*Research Director.*

APRIL 1941.

XVII

# The Dome of the Capitol<sup>1</sup>

I have not yet found the cadence  
Of the song of the Capitol's dome.

It is a long slow measure;  
The swing of the Decades is in it  
And its beat is the timing of generations \* \* \*

The patience of Lincoln is in it, \* \* \*  
The thunder of Webster is in it \* \* \*  
And the wisdom of Washington  
Speaking to nations.

The Atlantic, the Pacific  
Are in it,  
Deep calling to deep \* \* \*  
The rhythm of paddles is in it,  
Paddling canoes  
Up the St. Joseph,  
Down the Ohio,  
Up the Missouri,  
The long strong sweep of the paddles,  
The paddles of pioneer men.

The tempo of axe-strokes is in it  
Cutting rafters for cabins,  
And firewood for hearthstones,  
And rockers for cradles, \* \* \*

Sometimes it seems like the soft lullaby  
Of a mother as her babe falls asleep \* \* \*

And again it brings to my ears  
The long overtones of the past  
Echoing far into the future,  
—When in the course of human events—  
—We, the people of the United States—  
—The Union, it must and shall be preserved—  
—A just and lasting peace among ourselves  
—And with all nations—  
—Nor take from the mouth of labor  
—The bread that it has earned—

Words—  
Sharper than swords,  
Greater than greed,  
Words for the writing of judgments,  
Words for the healing of nations \* \* \*.

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from a poem by Samuel B. Pettengill, from *National Parent-Teacher*, February 1940, reprinted by permission of the magazine and of the author.

## Prologue

### Perspectives of American Democracy

Democracy as we know it in the United States is in part a gift of happy circumstance: Here people endowed with initiative, and seeking to escape from shackles that constricted the spirit, found a land rich in natural resources and free from encumbering institutions and traditions of a thousand years. In part democracy is the product of painful study, perseverance, and ingenuity, and, like other achievements of culture—the arts, religion, ethics—it has been developed through love and labor. In the United States democracy has been given its clearest expression in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. Intelligent statecraft has made it practicable and has given it form and strength in the Constitution of the United States.

But the benefits of democracy are not gifts distributed by a “great white father.” Nor are they assured possessions gained for all time through revolutions or wars of freedom. When gained, they are not held automatically but must be won anew from day to day.

The man who would demand, create, and maintain democracy is one who is bold, strong, adventurous. He is an idealist, for he sees not the limits of his powers so much as their possibilities. He has capacity to create beauty, to give love, to adventure with his mind as he has adventured with his body. His intelligence tells him that he can have the blessings of freedom only when his neighbor also has them, and with his neighbor he agrees on the rules of the game by which both may live freely, yet not interfere with each other.

Many of the first migrants to this land were men of this type; they sought the things that had the makings of our democracy of today. They were adventurous, risking life for a living, for possession, power, glory. They were bold, bursting asunder the shackles of constraining life in an unhappy, exploited, and, in places, decadent Europe—the shackles of a caste system, of religious intolerance, of feudal enslavement, of incredible poverty, of the ambitions of irresponsible rulers, of cruel penal systems. The earthy democracy shaped by the early settlers was stimulated rather than constrained by religious faith; it provided the raw material out of which the sense of democratic freedom grew, which made it possible for the Declaration of Independence to be not an image painted by a dreamer, but the expression of strong conviction deeply rooted in a culture already shaping.

The political and legal history of America has been a history of increasing this new freedom and of safeguarding it from enemies old and new, domestic and foreign; from dangers open and hidden; from the evils lurking in success as well as from those feared from failure. For our great menace is that contained in the possession of phenomenal wealth, in unprecedented power, in justifiable pride, in the very ingeniousness of our form of government.

We think of democracy most often and most naturally as relating to the form of government. To us it means, primarily, equal and universal suffrage. This means that every man has as much right as any other to decide who shall make his laws and enforce them. Political freedom is the foundation of all freedom. Rule by the majority, under constitutional safeguards of the rights of the individual and of minorities, is the safeguard against tyranny by the few. Therefore we have extended the right to vote, making the legal standard universal participation by all responsible adults. The vote, however, like all sacred possessions of man, has had to be guarded against its natural enemies: Dishonest purchase by corrupt politicians, neglect through lack of civic activity, and misuse resulting from deceptive propaganda.

The vote, together with majority rule, has been the bulwark of individual freedom which held the masses safe against that ancient enemy, enslavement by the few. The rights of the individual must still be paramount. The well-being of *every* man is the goal of democracy; it is the only assurance of the happiness of *any* man. Freedom is assured to members of the majority only while it is not denied to those in the minority.

There are many dangers to freedom that must be guarded against in our democracy. There is the danger, for example, that inheres in a sense of racial and ethnic superiority. This danger the American has not escaped. Exploitation of the Indian, the institution of slavery, and the deprivation of Negro, Mexican, oriental, and recent immigrant of his rights as a human equal have been blemishes on our unfolding democracy. That we nevertheless still preserve and expand the democratic way of life is a tribute to the invincible power of the democratic genius, to the deep generosity of the free man.

Another menace has shadowed American democracy from its very inception—one especially subtle, because it arises from the very heart of the democratic principle that all men are equal. That the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" is inalienable and equally the possession of all men came to be interpreted in the field of government to mean that every man is as capable as any other of holding and performing the duties of any public office. The business of government is becoming more complicated and more dependent on technical performance, just as the whole civilized mechanism is growing in complexity and demanding an increasing variety of skill and knowledge. Although the right to hold office has been preserved for every citizen, the exercise of this right in

combination with political patronage has grown at times to proportions that might easily have wrecked the very government that makes choice by the electorate possible. It is only in recent years that democratic genius has succeeded in developing a sound merit system in public service that should eventually remove this menace to the Republic.

The underlying condition of democracy, the most important and the most difficult to attain, is the democratic attitude of the individual citizen. No man by his own merit and decision has chosen his parents, the country of his birth, the color of his skin, his height, his brains, his capacity to create or to appreciate beauty; no man, then, can claim the right to despise his fellow for the lack of any of these possessions, from which he may derive great benefit and happiness and by which he may contribute to the welfare of his family, his kin, or all mankind. The ultimate worth of any man—apart from the benefit of his achievements to his fellows—is no greater than that of another. His right to life and its satisfactions is no greater. This is the foundation and the ultimate justification of democracy. This, of necessity, is the rational ground for the democratic attitude. Yet to maintain a democratic attitude is more difficult than to accept its rational foundation. We fall easily into the habit of thinking not only that we are better, but even that we are more deserving, than some of our fellows. In this country the population is predominantly white, and the white man tends to think himself superior to members of other races and entitled to better things. Among some of us the tendency still lingers to think of the native-born American or the descendant of Anglo-Saxon stock as in some way superior to foreigner or to non-Anglo-Saxon. These notions are often held without realization that they violate the principle of democracy.

Another danger to individual liberty in this democracy has used the very slogans of democracy as a mask for its operations. Material success and the power that it gives have been the chief reward for individual enterprise, the application of intelligence and toil. To many the slogan "from newsboy to president" has become a democratic coat-of-arms. But the spirit behind this slogan has also contributed to the forces that have tended to concentrate wealth and power in a few hands; it has tended to reestablish a simulacrum of the aristocratic tradition of feudalism, though one built upon money rather than upon pedigree. Individual freedom, when turned into freedom to exploit, has tended to become a menace to that very freedom and a threat to democracy.

These dangers are subtle, but they are real. Our safeguard is to understand the nature and advantages of true democracy as compounded of freedom and of order, to increase them in every way, to take pride in them, to bring up our children to understand and love them, to help them practice democracy and, through such exercise, to develop and enlarge its meaning.

Only as we realize the value of this democracy for which settler and immigrant have worked, for which the Nation has fought, and which

lawmaker, judge, citizen, and public servant create anew day after day, only as we are imbued with its transcendent importance, can we plan the upbringing of children in a democracy. For it is essential that every child learn the ways and the pursuits of life in which the democratic idea is practiced. And above all else, children in a democracy must be helped to attain a fundamentally democratic attitude: to despise no color, creed, or race; to worship neither wealth nor success nor station in life based on possessions or class distinction. They, as their elders, must see that political democracy is but an empty shell unless it seeks to provide equal opportunity, access for all to the achievements of civilization, and hope of better things for all its citizens.



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PART I  
BACKGROUNDS

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# Chapter I

## The Point of View

### Title of the Conference

**T**HREE conferences on child welfare had been held under White House auspices before the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy in 1940. Each one was a milestone of progress, each served to call public attention to urgent unmet needs of children, and each made a notable contribution to the improvement of their conditions. The "White House" as a symbol has given these conferences the stamp of national concern. But none of the previous conferences included the word *democracy* in its title.

Have we, then, discovered some new relationship between democracy and child welfare, or one that requires greater emphasis and more attention by public opinion today? Is there some particular significance in the idea of democracy that had escaped us before? Or has it become more precious, its existence more precarious, or its values more debatable, that in connection with the welfare of the child we emphasize our allegiance to democracy?

Early in the deliberations of the Conference these questions took concrete form when, in a discussion of health activities, someone asked: "Is not a healthy child healthy regardless of ideologies?" In a democracy the objective in assuring children's health, growth, and development is to produce persons with vitality, initiative, competence, and sufficient vigor to enable them to give expression to their unique qualities of personality. This objective arises from the faith that the inherent social nature of man is potentially good, and that the greatest contribution as a cooperative social being can be made by the most completely developed free personality. The contrast between this point of view and one that would rear and train children to effective health in order to make of them good soldiers, good breeders, and efficient units in a state geared to production seems to measure the difference between "child health" and "child health in a democracy." If even in so objective a field as health and vigor the democratic point of view has practical as well as ideal values for children, it is reasonable to assume that it has particular importance in such fields as education, religion, the support, protection, and guidance of family life, and in the preparation of children for a responsible part in the civic and economic structure of the Nation.

## The Democratic Credo

Throughout the deliberations of the Conference the concept of democratic values was kept constantly in view in the consideration of every subject. The democratic credo has entered into all the major phases of its orientation. The effect of this attitude will be evident throughout the present document in the dissatisfaction expressed with certain present conditions and in the nature of the Conference recommendations. From the interplay of the concept of democracy and the consideration of the particular needs of children, there emerged a certain pattern of ideals, practical goals, and proposals which the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy submitted to the Nation at its concluding meeting in January 1940. The principal features of this pattern imply that—

*Preparation of the child for a democratic life has significance only if he is to enter a social system patterned on the democratic principle; where there is no democracy for the adult, there can be no democracy for the child. The pursuit of the democratic ideal in the ways of American life must go hand in hand with the democratic training of the child. Political participation, civic activity, exercise of the franchise, and preservation of civil liberties are of fundamental importance.*

*The most general and far-reaching institution in which democracy may be fostered is the family. The family may be, and therefore should be, for the child the threshold of democracy. Relations between parent and child, among all members of the family, and between family and world outside therefore offer the first materials in the school of democracy. In this first school of democracy, the family, the child develops his first moral and ethical standards and receives his first religious training.*

*Life in the family, the program of education, and community life are the major laboratories of experience for the child. If the democratic flavor is to pervade his growing experience, it must be abundantly present in all these sources of experience.*

*As civilized life becomes more complex, the responsibility for meeting the needs of the child is divided more and more between family and community. As standards of living rise and scientific invention multiplies the means for making life safer, happier, longer, and more meaningful, the economic costs of adapting the child to this complex life increase. The chief providers for the welfare of the child, each in its own way, are the family and the community. First in order, therefore, is a family group itself adapted physically, morally, spiritually, and economically to give the child the best start in life. To this end the establishment of economic security for the family is of basic importance.*

*Political and economic competence and economic solvency of the community are next in importance, so that an adequate supply of the basic community services for the welfare of the child may be assured: Schooling, recreation, health supervision, medical care, religious training, and vocational preparation.*

*As children enter these scenes and institutions, the relationships should continue to be of a democratic nature, encouraging self-expression, inviting cooperative effort, leading to a sense of equality and an appreciation of the inner worth of the individual. To make this possible, the school system, recreational opportunities, medical services, and church activities should develop the democratic pattern in their procedures.*

*Both the family and the community depend for their economic solvency and progress upon the total structure of the national economy. Soundness of the national economy in a democracy is, moreover, inseparable from the maintenance of democratic relationships in the field of employment, and implies the ultimate power on the part of the voter to determine policies regarding the natural resources of the Nation and the character of its economy.*

*The assurance of democratic organization and control in government, the democratization of industrial relations, and the pursuit of the democratic ideal in education and in the family and community are inseparably bound up with the maintenance of civil liberties and the observance of the Bill of Rights, particularly with respect to freedom of speech, press, worship, teaching, and assembly. Child welfare, if it depends upon the democratic life, depends also upon the preservation of all these forms of freedom.*

*Cooperation, the counterpart of freedom in a democracy, has meaning and justification only when such freedom exists. Cooperation without freedom is regimentation; cooperation with freedom is democracy.*

*In a democratic nation the government, whether local or central, is the servant and instrument of the people. Conflict between the interest of government and the interest of the individual in a true democracy is a contradiction in terms. In view of the unequal assets and capacities of individuals, essential freedom and the chance of democratic participation for all are possible only as law and custom prevent those who combine power with lack of fundamental standards of ethical conduct from exploiting the weak. Government is the instrument for this control and regulation. It is also the instrument for developing the community services that supplement what the parent can do for the child. In the history of nations, governments were frequently imposed upon people, and freedom therefore came to mean removal of governmental power and limitation of governmental activities. In a democracy, government becomes the instrument for increasing services. It becomes the symbol of democratic life. Government, therefore, should be efficient, responsive to public will, and an object of pride in a democracy for which children are prepared.*

*Whatever the degree of excellence of the democratic setting of life—political, economic, educational, religious, cultural—some children are handicapped in the enjoyment of its blessings. These handicaps may be physical or mental; they may arise out of unhappy home life, the loss of parents, or discriminations against minority groups; they may be the result of economic destitution or insecurity, or of a pathological condition in the*

*child's own make-up. In a democracy every effort will be made to counter-balance these handicaps by providing for all children as nearly as possible the equal opportunity in life and in the pursuit of happiness that was assumed to be the foundation of this Nation in its Declaration of Independence.*

## Review of Recent Progress

The three or four decades before 1930 were a period of great progress in the United States. Through many ups and downs—"cycles" in the economist's way of speaking—prosperity was increasing, the standard of living was rising, and a unified national consciousness was growing.

As crude exploitation of the resources of a virgin land and of the opportunities presented by a growing population slowly gave way to the growth of a more settled American culture, efforts and funds were invested in the general welfare in increasingly abundant amounts. A growing social conscience was taking shape in new and increased activities of individuals and groups and in expanding functions of government.

Enactment of social legislation is one example of this process. Such legislation included protection of women and children in industry and the establishment of public agencies to deal with industrial relations, public welfare, health, workmen's compensation, and mothers' pensions. The labor movement gained in strength, despite many setbacks, and wages and conditions of work gradually improved.

Public funds were expended in increasing amounts for parks, museums, schools, playgrounds, libraries, medical services, and research in such diverse fields as agriculture and medicine. School authorities conducted extensive and fruitful experiments in kindergarten teaching, vocational preparation, and the development of secondary education. Underlying much of this progress was a rising interest in the discoveries of psychology, with its illumination of human motives and its tolerant understanding of the vagaries of human behavior.

Many new agencies were created during these decades for the purpose of serving the public, as distinct from those designed for profit or livelihood. Social agencies to help people in trouble were established in large numbers and under many auspices. They were supported by public funds, voluntary contributions, and the resources of many new "foundations."

The Conference of 1940 came after 10 years of economic depression of great depth and unprecedented duration. A large section of the population was left without income for months or even years. Since the economic soundness of a country underlies the continuance of its freedom, the development of its culture, and the quality of its public services, it might have been expected that the decade following 1929 would exhibit the worst conditions ever suffered by the people of this country. There might have come either a retrogression to pioneer hardship or an attempt to escape by way of dictatorship. Instead, during this period basic problems of agriculture,

banking, finance, conservation of natural resources, employment, economic security, housing, and long-range economic stabilization have been examined in a democratic spirit and remedial processes have been set in motion.

The health of the Nation has been studied and appraised. Medical science has been brought more extensively into public service. Death rates have been reduced, tuberculosis has been more nearly brought under control, the health of children has been improved. Medical services have been expanded; public-health administration has been mobilized, through local, State, and Federal agencies, for steady progress toward building a healthy Nation. More has been learned about health dangers and deficiencies, the means of reducing them have been formulated, and programs of action have been established.

Education, recreation, and the problems of youth have been studied by public and voluntary bodies on a national scale and with a realism often enhanced by local participation and initiative. Nation-wide programs for the benefit of youth have been established.

But the purpose of this Conference is not to boast of the accomplishments of our democracy in prosperity and depression, but rather to press forward to further achievements more worthy of the freedom and wealth of our Nation. It is gratifying to note how fast and how consistently the general standard of living and the national income have risen through the decades despite the interruption of periodic depressions. It is heartening to review the progress made and to observe the stability of our democratic institutions under strain. But the special obligation of this Conference is to point out such shortcomings and deficiencies as still exist. For while there is proof of progress that betokens our abilities, there is also evidence of lags unworthy of our resources and of our intelligence.

In some ways the financial collapse of 1929 and its aftermath of prolonged depression constitute evidence of this type. Even though there were danger signs of economic unsoundness—soil erosion, mortgage foreclosures, wild financial speculation, concentration of financial control and increase of monopoly, growing imbalance between productive capacity and consuming power—still prosperity in the year 1929 appeared to be speeding along on its high plateau, only to plunge suddenly and precipitously into the historic crash that turned into the long depression of the thirties.

Although progress has been made toward restoring economic health since the break-down of 1929, and new measures for economic security and for the development of national resources in the public interest have been put into effect, there are still great areas of distress among our people, to which this Conference is bound to call attention, as they endanger the welfare of millions of children. Great inequalities have been discovered throughout the country in the opportunities available for children and youth; shocking lacks are apparent in rural areas, in low-income groups, among the unemployed, among migrant workers, and in various minority

groups. Honest inquiry has uncovered conditions unworthy of a democracy with resources like ours, and dangerous to its future.

This country has shown itself capable of dealing with a catastrophic depression without loss of courage or determination. The White House Conference on Children in a Democracy feels free, therefore, to call public attention to the many conditions that still are hazardous to children and to the future of our democracy. It has no misgivings about the Nation's capacity to face unpleasant facts, its will to take on new responsibilities, and its readiness to accept great burdens. The goal is clear, and abundant resources are at hand.

### Scope of Interest

It has been said repeatedly in the deliberations of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy that it is interested in all the children of the country—more than 40 million of them under 18 years of age. But some of these children require more interest, or a different kind of interest, than others. Some are still exposed to the hazards of premature and dangerous occupation; some have no school to go to; some have no place to play; some go astray for need of guidance and the assuring hand of the parent; any child may be exposed to irremediable damage if ignorance endangers his physical safety at birth or if his family life is molded on the regimental existence of the barracks or is distorted and embittered by a turmoil of bickering. Some disadvantages are suffered by only a minority, whether small or large, of the child population, whereas others may affect the great majority, yet not be quite universal.

In its study of the diverse needs of children the White House Conference has seen the children of the country as classified into three overlapping groups: One includes all, or practically all, the children of the land; another comprises a relatively small number—those who are decidedly disadvantaged in one or several ways; and a third, made up of one-half to two-thirds of the child population of the country, which is characterized principally by the fact that the income of their families does not permit the level of material comfort and security that we have come to think of as a tolerable American standard of living.

Standards of child care and the needs of children are concepts that obviously relate to all children. Every child needs a family: Two parents and, if possible, brothers and sisters. The quality of family life desired is the same for all: Affection and understanding, camaraderie and a sharing of responsibility and opportunity, and an atmosphere of democracy. These things are not necessarily affected by differences in economic rank, social group, or racial background. All children need adequate shelter and nourishing food. Religious needs and standards in their nature are universal. All children need the influence of religious training and the opportunity to understand and appreciate the great religious heritage that



has come down to them. All children need places to play, and, under the conditions of an urban civilization, they depend for these very largely upon public provision through municipality, county, or larger political unit. Public-health measures, from control of epidemics to regular health supervision and medical care; civic responsibilities; political interest; schooling; a comprehensive program of education, embracing museum, library, and music, are equally significant for all. The standards of performance, qualifications of personnel, and theoretical soundness that we seek in the professional services of teachers, recreation leaders, health authorities, physicians, nurses, and public officials are fundamentally the same, whatever children are served. For all children we need to study how best to maintain and enrich family life, how to preserve and extend democratic practices, and how to ascertain and realize attainable standards in education, health, housing, civic life, the arts, religion, and culture. Much of the discussion in these pages will address itself to these standards and goals in an endeavor to bring together and to restate this country's aspirations for all its children.

On the other hand, this Conference, like its predecessors, has perforce recognized that a great many children are subject to certain disadvantages that automatically deprive them of equal access to the benefits of American civilization. Some of these children have been the concern of warm-hearted persons and of public authorities through the years. Children who are crippled, blind, deaf, mentally deficient, or affected with certain physical or mental ailments constitute the chief components of this group, especially when the extra care they require exceeds the economic capacity of the ordinary family. Another component of this group, the one perhaps best known to the general public, includes the orphans—happily a diminishing group—the neglected and abandoned children, and the delinquents. These children lack the basic conditions of health and happiness which we assume to be assured for every child through normal life. There are hundreds of thousands of such children. Their plight was responsible for the calling of the first White House Conference on child welfare.

A large proportion of the children deprived of reasonable opportunity are the children whose families are in economic distress. Prior to the depression there may have been hundreds of thousands in this category—underfed, ill-clothed, driven and anxious, slowly losing the vitality and hope that are childhood's right. Less conspicuous than the homeless or crippled, less pathetic than the paralyzed or blind, less disturbing than the delinquents, these underfed children of poor families were probably always the most numerous company in the army of disadvantaged children. With the depression, however, they not only became more numerous than the others but made up a large proportion of the total body of American children. Eight to eleven million children at a time have been members of families receiving public relief or some other form of economic assistance, and there is ample testimony that there were many more who needed such

assistance but did not get it. The depression merely increased the number of families with insufficient income, and thus increased the total number of children with unequal opportunities, so that at times in recent years this disadvantaged group has included as many as one-fourth of all the children of the Nation. These must be the object of special concern, for they are a part of the total body of children whose welfare is the foundation of our democracy.

The third grouping of the children in part overlaps the handicapped group and is more difficult to define. They are not the obviously handicapped nor the evidently destitute. They are not in immediate danger of life, limb, or existence.

This group consists of the children in families that, although not destitute, have less income than is required for maintenance at a reasonable standard. It includes roughly half to two-thirds of all the children, an estimate based on the most recent—and conservative—Nation-wide study of family incomes.<sup>1</sup> It would seem, in other words, that what we like to think of as the American standard of living is enjoyed by, at most, only one-half of our children, principally those of city-dwellers—white, native born, engaged in business, the professions, and other “white collar” occupations or skilled work. The rest, more than half, are largely the children of those employed in agriculture—small farmers, farm tenants, migratory laborers—especially in the South and in stranded industrial areas, and also children of unskilled workers in the cities. Among these occupational groups of low income are to be found the bulk of the minority elements of the population: Indians, Negroes, Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and a considerable part of the children born in this country of foreign or mixed parentage.

If, then, all the children of the land are to receive the blessings of the material achievements of the United States and of its democratic institutions, three great tasks lie before the American people: (1) To define and pursue the highest practicable standards for the full life for all American children; (2) to exert every effort in the interest of the specially disadvantaged children, so as to remove their limitations, whether physical, mental, cultural, or economic; (3) to lift the general conditions surrounding the life of the majority of its children to a level of reasonable living; and to this end to deal with some of the fundamental problems of the national economy—wages, agricultural income, employment, and governmental and administrative readjustments in the economics of handicapped communities. More secure and larger family incomes and adequate community finances are the chief means for supplying deficiencies in opportunity for one-half to two-thirds of the children of the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed statement see Chapter VI, *Livelihood*, especially pp. 81–82, and Appendix 1.

## Plan of the Report

The concern of this Conference is with children. The bulk of its report (Parts II and III), which constitutes the basis and supporting evidence for the recommendations that were promulgated in the General Report of the Conference, is devoted to a consideration of their diverse needs and to the study of ways and means by which they may be met. The knowledge and experience of many leaders have been drawn upon in formulating these findings and proposals. Some of the recommendations of the Conference bear principally upon services received directly by the child, such as schooling, recreation, physical care, treatment of handicaps, and the development of his capacity to experience creative emotions and to gain satisfactions from social life. Other proposals are of an indirect nature, intended to benefit the child through his family and community; among these are economic measures, governmental and administrative improvements, public-health measures, and measures to improve the conditions surrounding Negroes and other minority groups.

The chapters that constitute Part I undertake to sketch the general background for the studies of the special problems that are dealt with in Parts II and III. The significance of the title of the White House Conference of 1940, what the Conference understands by the democratic way of life, the scope and nature of its interest in the children of the country, some general facts about the distribution of the children, who they are, where they live and something of the conditions under which they live are the subjects of the first two chapters.

Chapter III attempts to review some of the features of American life in the light of history. It is seen that the general pattern of our democratic life has been laid, its outlines engraved, its scope developed through the history of the Nation. All this constitutes the nature and characteristics of the American scene within which are conducted the services associated with child welfare. Many of the aspirations of this Conference, based on appreciation of the fundamental needs of children and knowledge of the conditions prevailing among the children of the Nation, will be recognized as reasonable and necessary only in relation to the features of the larger American scene as we see it in 1940.

Against this background of the American scene the particular disadvantages of children in minority groups are discussed in Chapter IV, and in the succeeding chapter a summary picture is presented of the common needs of all children, whatever their individual requirements and conditions of life may be.

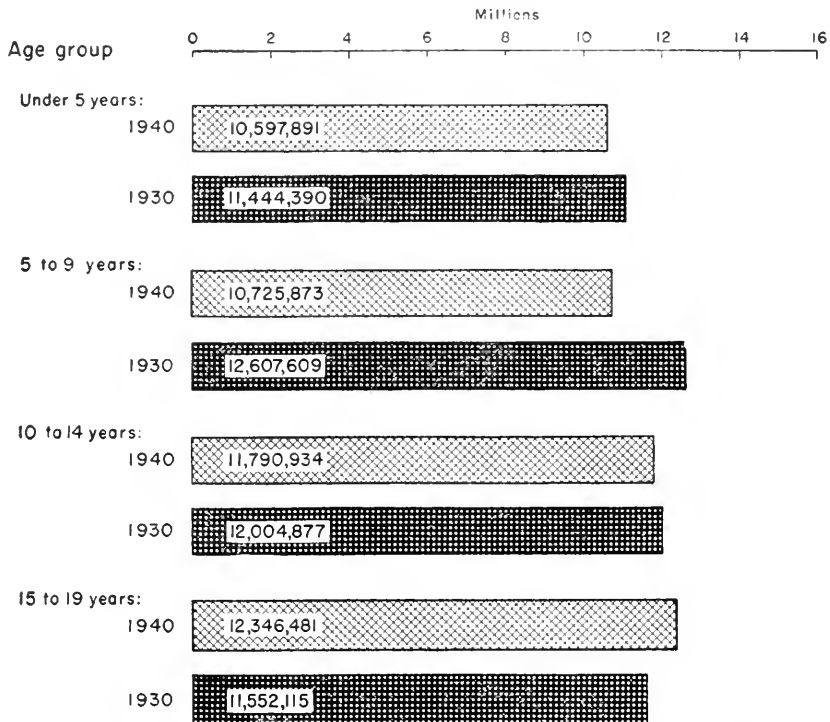
Parts II and III present the bulk of facts and findings relating to the well-being of children and their families, and in Part IV the Recommendations of the Conference are given in detail.

## Chapter II

### The Children of America: Numbers and Distribution

THERE were nearly 36 million children under 16 in continental United States in 1940, more than 40 million under 18, and more than 45 million under 20.<sup>1</sup> The number of children under 20 in 1940 was about 2 million less than in 1930. There will be still fewer in 1950, if recent trends continue, but the anticipated decline in the number and proportion of children will not be rapid enough to warrant any slackening of effort toward expansion of opportunities and services that are now inadequate.

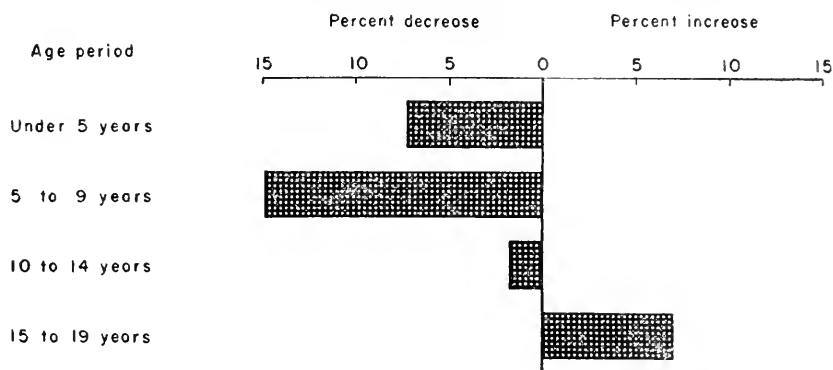
Chart 1.—Number of children in four age groups under 20 years of age; United States, 1940 and 1930<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from 1930 census of population and preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population.

<sup>1</sup> *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940*: Preliminary figures based on a 5-percent cross section of 1940 census returns. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Washington.

Chart 2.—Percentage decrease or increase in the population of four age groups under 20 years of age; United States, 1930 and 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from 1930 census of population and preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population.

Nearly all these children were born in the United States, from a great variety of ethnic stocks. If we imagine 1,000 of them standing in a row, 898 will be white, 97 will be Negro, and 5 will be representatives of other races.

Most of the Nation's children live in normally constituted families. In the white population of the country in 1930 it has been estimated that there were 2,718,000 orphaned children under 16 years of age, or 81 out of every 1,000 children under 16.<sup>2</sup> Of the 81, only 4 had lost both father and mother, 31 had lost mother only, 46, father only. If the general population of 1930 had been subject to the same mortality rates at the ages of parenthood as the population of 1901, the number of orphans in 1930 would have been much larger—4,634,000 instead of 2,718,000. There should be, therefore, even fewer orphans in 1940 than in 1930, for the mortality rates of parents have continued to decline and there are fewer children in the population. Families are broken not only by death but also by divorce, separation, and desertion; or they may be incomplete from the beginning because the parents are not married. In 1930 about a million children under 16 were in families broken or incomplete for these reasons. A broken family does not always, however, or even ordinarily, mean loss of family life for the child. Other relatives may substitute for parents, and it is public policy to "keep the family together" if possible. Although in 1930 not far from 4 million children were in families broken by death and other causes, only about 250,000 (in 1933) were in institutions for the care of dependent children or in foster-family homes, and not all of these came from broken families.<sup>3</sup>

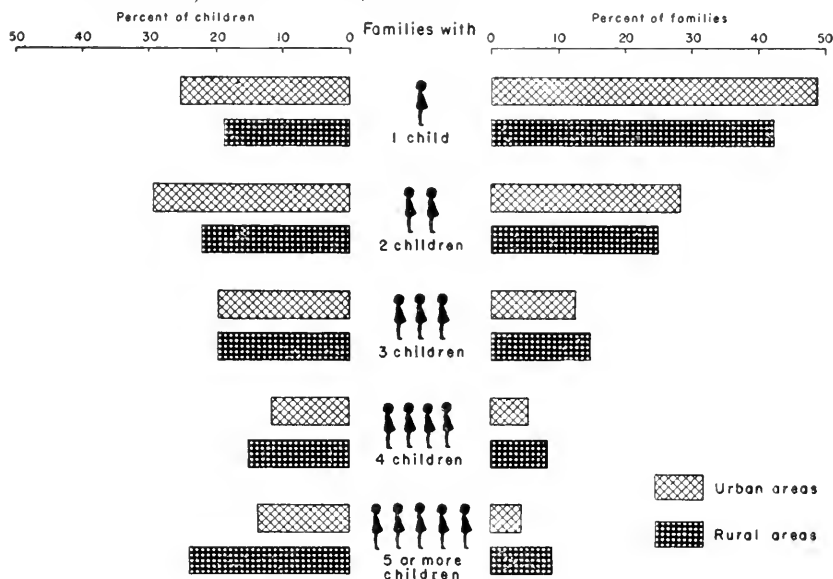
<sup>2</sup> The Broken Family—Widowhood and Orphanhood, by Mortimer Spiegelman. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November 1936, pp. 117-130.

<sup>3</sup> Population Trends and Future Problems of Child Welfare, by Katharine F. Lenroot and Robert J. Myers. *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3 (July 1940), pp. 198-213.

Further light on the distribution of children under 16 years of age comes from the National Health Survey in 1935-36. In the urban families included in the survey it was found that 87 percent of the 647,420 children were in "husband and wife" families, 2 percent in families with father but no mother, 9 percent in families with mother but no father, and 2 percent in "nonparent" families. In the smaller sample of rural families the proportion of children in fatherless families was less, the proportion in "nonparent" families greater.<sup>4</sup>

One-fourth of the city children had (at the time) no brothers or sisters under 16 years of age; about 30 percent had one, and 20 percent had two. Among the rural children also, 20 percent were in families in which there were three children under 16, but fewer of the rural children were in the smaller families (chart 3).

Chart 3.—Percentage of children under 16 years of age in families and percentage of families with children under 16 years of age, by area and number of children; United States, 1935-36<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Children in Urban and Rural Families* (Social Security Bulletin, October 1939).

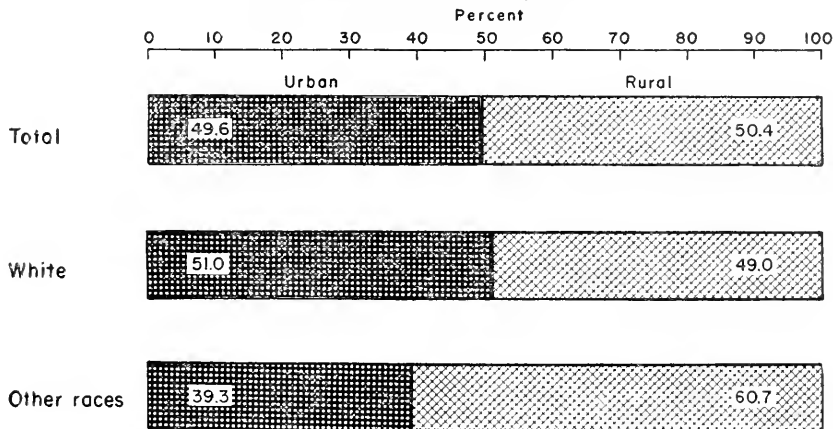
Numerically the Nation's children under 16 in 1940 were almost equally divided between city and country (49 percent and 51 percent), but in proportion to population of all ages there were a good many more in the country than in the city. They constituted only 23 percent of the urban population, 34 percent of the population on farms, and 30 percent of the population living in villages and other nonfarm rural communities. In the age group just older (16 to 20), movement to the city begins, especially

<sup>4</sup> *Children in Urban and Rural Families*, by Barkev S. Sanders and Doris Carlton. *Social Security Bulletin* Vol. 2, No. 10 (October 1939), pp. 36-46.

from rural communities, with the result that the proportion more nearly approximates that of the total population. Chart 4 shows the proportion of the population under 20 years of age in urban and rural areas in 1940.

Children, like adults, are very unevenly distributed over the country. The mere number of children in a State or region has little significance, in view of the great differences among the States in area, density of population, and other characteristics, but their distribution in relation to human and economic resources is of prime importance. The ratio of children to adults of productive age, the proportion of the population gainfully employed, and the amount of per capita and family income are

**Chart 4.—Percentage of population under 20 years of age in urban and rural areas; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Urban areas include all incorporated places with 2,500 or more population; all other places are included with rural. Based on preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population.

indicators that may be used to estimate the well-being of children in any State and their relative well-being in different States and regions, and to illuminate many differences in opportunity that are pointed out in later chapters.

Other things being equal, a low ratio of children to adults is presumptive evidence of favorable economic conditions for the children. It implies an adequate supply of elders to give them care and attention and to earn money for them. In 1940 the proportion of the population under 20 years of age varied from 28 percent in California to 46 percent in South Carolina (chart 5).

A large proportion in the population of persons aged 65 or over would be expected to reduce somewhat the resources available for children, but in no State were they more than 10 percent of the total, and in the States with the smallest and the largest proportion of children, California and South Carolina, they were as low as 8 percent and 4 percent, respectively.

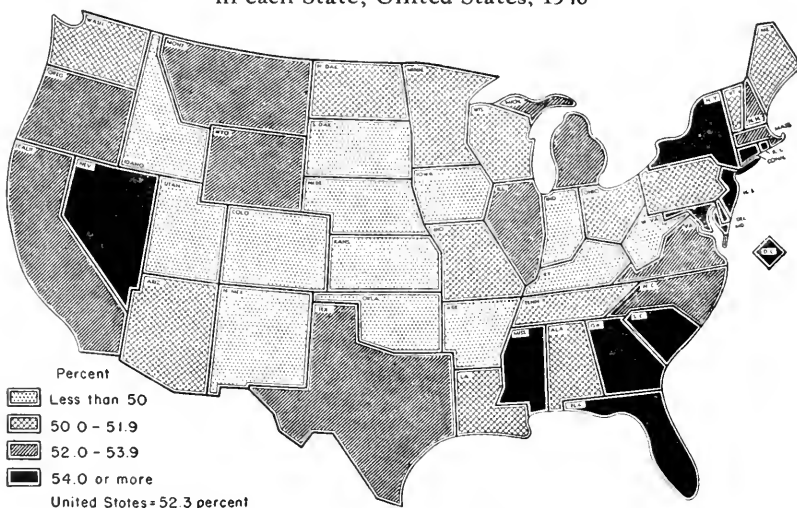
Chart 5.—Percentage of population under 20 years of age in each State, United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population

Another circumstance that may be assumed to have a bearing on the welfare of children in any locality is the proportion of the population that is gainfully employed. This varied in 1940 from 41 percent in West Virginia to 57 percent in the District of Columbia. The proportion of the population in the labor force in 1940—that is, persons 14 years of age and over who were employed or seeking work—varied among the States from 46 percent in Utah to 57 percent in Connecticut (chart 6).

Chart 6.—Percentage of population 14 years old and over in the labor force in each State; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>

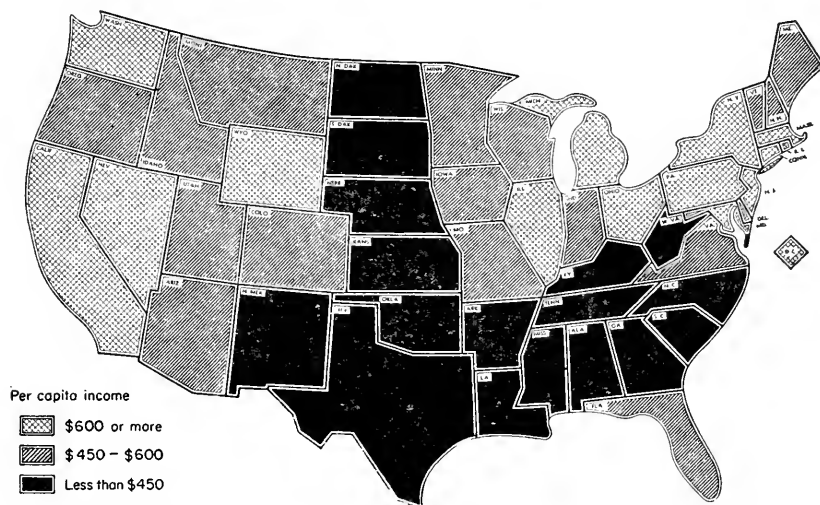


<sup>1</sup> Based on preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population.



The best index of the general economic condition of the people, and hence of the material resources available in different parts of the country to provide for the children, is that of per capita income. In 1940, the average income per person was \$573 for the United States, and among the States it ranged from \$960 in Nevada down to \$195 in Mississippi.<sup>5</sup> This variegated income complexion of the States is shown in chart 7. A comparison of this income map with the map showing the percentage of the population under 20 in the States (chart 5) shows that in general a relatively high proportion of children coincides with a relatively low per capita income. When the States are grouped regional differences are seen in more im-

Chart 7.—Per capita income in each State; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, U. S. Department of Commerce.

pressive contrast (chart 8). The proportion of children in the population is in inverse ratio to the amount of national income, which is a rough index not only of family resources but also of tax resources from which the community provides facilities for the welfare of its children.

On the basis of national income, children living in the Far West are the most favorably situated and those in the Northeast next; the children of the Southwest and the Southeast have least in the way of material resources. The predominantly rural Southeast, poorest region of all, has about 12 percent of the national income and 25 percent of the children under 20.

Not only do more children live in the poorer sections of the country, but they are also concentrated in households at the lower income levels.<sup>6</sup> Of all the children under 16 in the large number of households in the cities

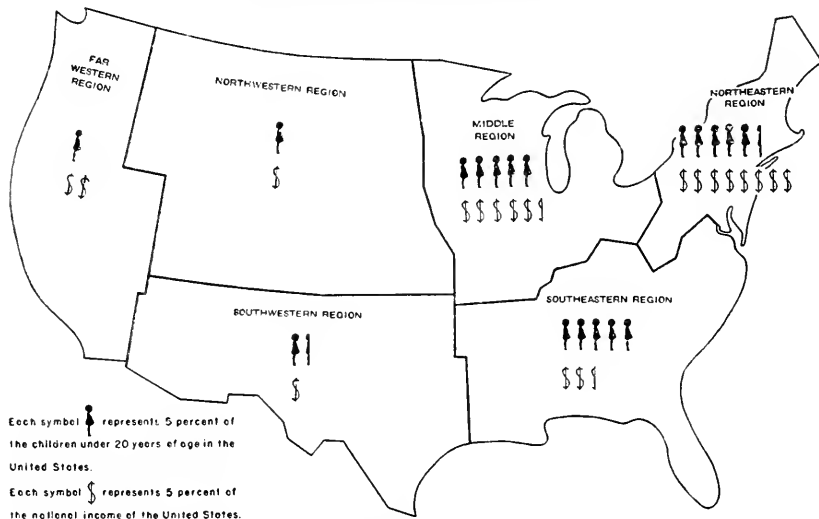
<sup>5</sup> Income Payments by States. *Survey of Current Business*, Vol. 21, No. 8 (August 1941). U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington.

<sup>6</sup> Economic Status of the Aged in Urban Households, by Barkev S. Sanders. *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 10 (October 1940), pp. 13-21.

covered by the National Health Survey, 60 percent were in households with a per capita annual income under \$250 (including relief). That was a much larger proportion than for any other age group, even the aged.

The National Health Survey in 1935-36 supplied statistical evidence to show that the economic status of the family varies inversely with the number of children under 16 years of age in the family.<sup>7</sup> Seventeen percent of the urban families with only one child under 16 had received some relief during the year; the percentage of families that had received some relief rose steadily with each additional child to 58 percent for the families with 9 children. On the other hand, among families with incomes of \$2,000 or more, the proportion of those with one child was 18 percent, but with each

Chart 8.—Children under 20 years of age and national income, by geographic regions; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>



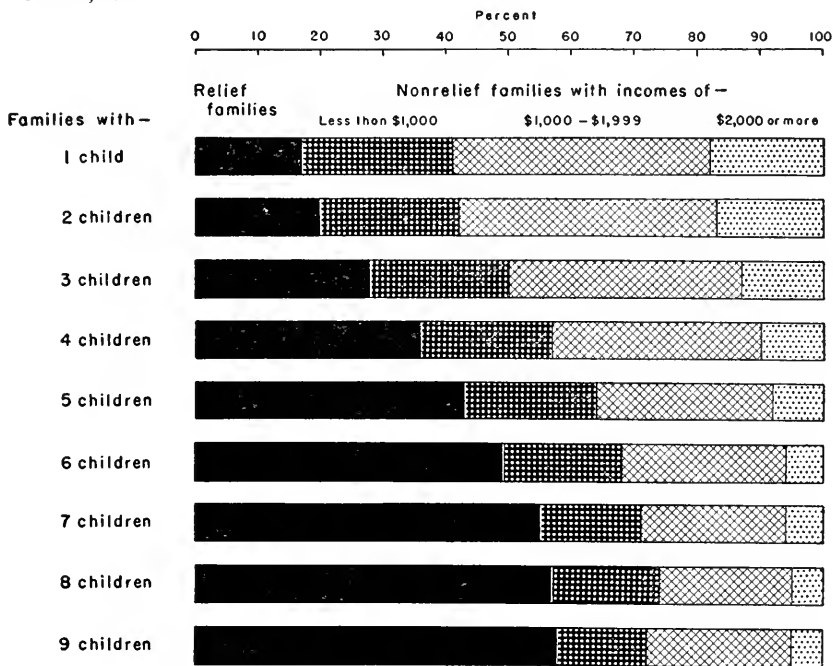
<sup>1</sup> Based on preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population and national-income data from the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, U. S. Department of Commerce.

additional child the percentage of families in this income group dropped steadily, to only 5 percent for the families with 9 children (chart 9).

It is of interest, for future planning and in view of the great differences in economic status, to ask which parts of the country and which elements of the population are contributing most of the additions and replacements to the present population (charts 10 and 11). The birth rate for the United States in 1940 was 17.9 per 1,000 population—a higher birth rate than for any year since 1931—and among the States it varied from 14.1 in New Jersey to 27.7 in New Mexico. The number of children under 5 years of

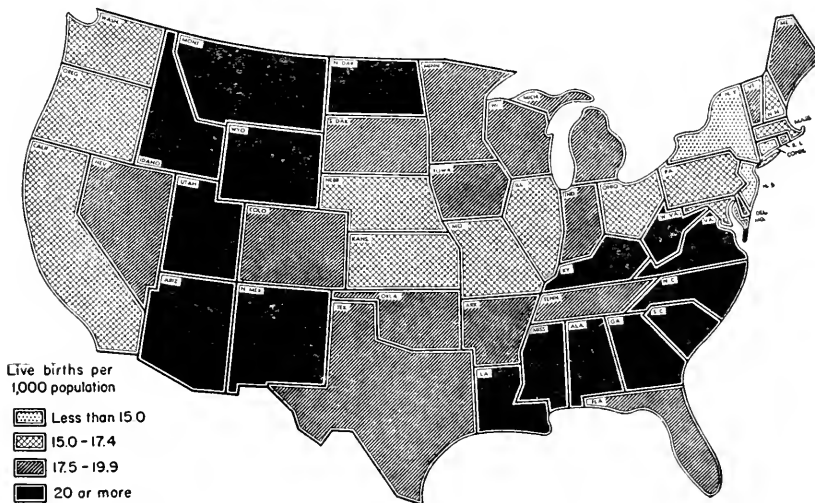
<sup>7</sup> The Economic Status of Urban Families and Children, by I. S. Falk and Barkev S. Sanders. *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 5 (May 1939), pp. 25-34.

Chart 9.—Percentage distribution of urban families with specified number of children under 16 years of age, by economic status of family; United States, 1935-36<sup>1</sup>



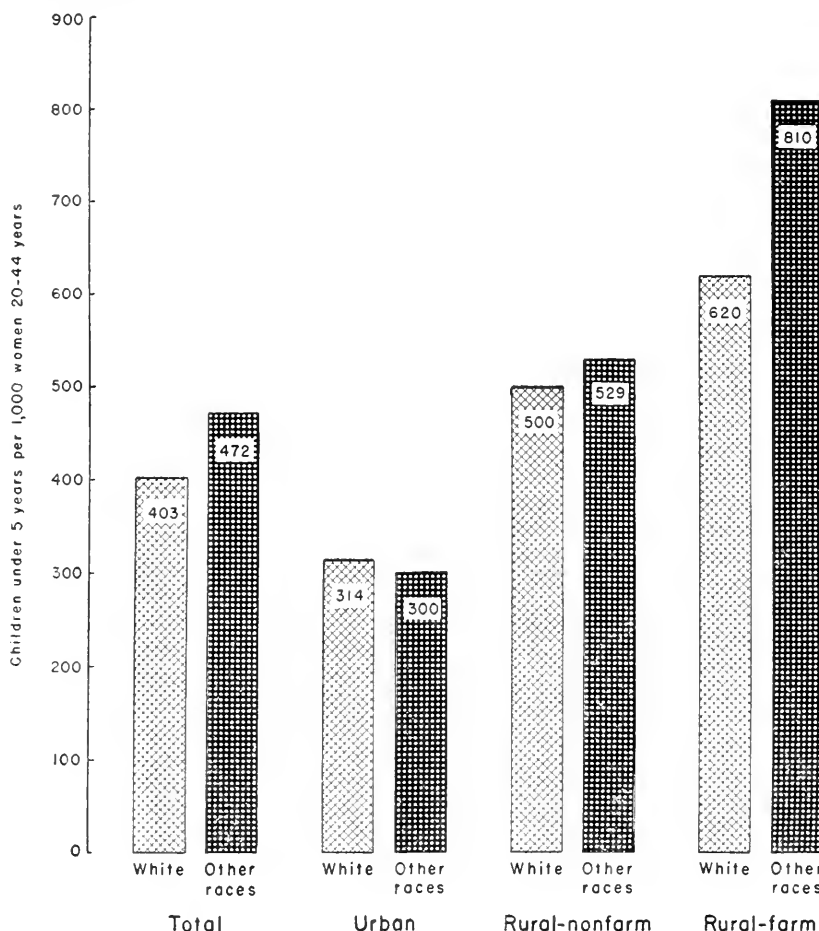
<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *The Economic Status of Urban Families and Children (Social Security Bulletin, May 1939)*.

Chart 10.—Birth rate in each State; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from U. S. Bureau of the Census.

Chart 11.—Number of children under 5 years of age per 1,000 women 20 to 44 years of age in urban, rural-farm, and rural-nonfarm areas; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population.

age per 1,000 women aged 20–44 is a rough measure of the “fertility” of a population, that is, effective fertility, not potential physiological fertility.

The rate for the rural-farm population was highest, that for the rural-nonfarm came next, and the rate for the urban population was lowest. In general the rate for the white population was lower than for “other races,” except in urban areas. The rate for the white population in cities was about half as high as on farms, but for “other races” it was only about one-third as high. Differences among the States in fertility by race may be due largely to differences in distribution of the population between city and rural area.

Differences in fertility seem to accompany also variations in educational

level of the mother and in economic status of the family.<sup>8</sup> Data collected in 1935-36 in the National Health Survey show that net reproduction rates were nearly twice as high among women who had left school before reaching the seventh grade as among college women, and among women in families with an annual income of less than \$1,000 as compared with women in families with \$3,000 or more.

Many population studies have shown, says one of our foremost students of population trends, that "the next generation comes from the poorer part of the population out of all proportion to its present numbers \* \* \* the most certain way to insure an improvement in child care and education for the children most needing it is to see that their parents get a better income."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The Differential Fertility and Potential Rates of Growth of Various Income and Educational Classes of Urban Populations in the United States, by Bernard D. Karpinos and Clyde V. Kiser. *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (October 1939), pp. 367-391.

<sup>9</sup> Population Changes and Child Welfare, by Warren S. Thompson. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 212, November 1940. pp. 18-3.

### Chapter III

## The American Setting

### Unity With Diversity

THE American scene of today, which is the setting for our 40 million children and our plans in their behalf, rests on a solid historical foundation in which the continuity is direct and clearly discernible. The concept of "The United States" as a nation is definite and settled. The fluidity of changing borders is gone. We have a sense of solidarity, of permanence. Although only in the second century of its existence, and young in comparison with other nations, our Nation nevertheless seems to have existed a long time.

This mature self-confidence of a settled national existence is of the utmost importance, for it helps to make possible and acceptable many changes, even fundamental changes, in the political and social life of our day. No matter how divergent and even violent the differences of opinion on legislative, administrative, and economic measures affecting the Nation, there is no thought today of division of the Union. The country is irreversibly and beyond debate *one Nation*. No longer even is it customary to use the plural verb with "The United States." When "national" standards are resisted—as they are in many phases of our life—when the National Government, national agencies, or national administration is under suspicious scrutiny, it is not national unity that is questioned, but rather the *degree of centralization* in the Federal Government and whether measures proposed as "national" are really national or only representative of a dominant section.

Our axiomatic acceptance of a Nation, "one and indivisible," rooted in the historical past, does not exclude, however, a somewhat contrary and paradoxical attitude in certain aspects of this unity. Almost unconsciously we have constructed a picture of the "American" who typifies this Nation, and we have tended to disdain groups in the Nation that do not conform to this idealized type. Divergences from the majority pattern, whether due to ethnic origin or to culture, to religion, race, occupation, or point of view have been made the basis of discrimination or prejudice. Yet these divergences in no sense interfere with the essential national unity, the most significant feature of which is its democratic outlook and its respect for the individual.

Diversities among the groups that make up this Nation are in fact as characteristic of it as is its sense of unity, as real as the living people who manifest them; an acceptance of this fact is indispensable for intelligent national planning and for building a national culture. Some of these divergences are indeed but the colorful embroidery of national life. The colonial homes of New England and Virginia, the Spanish and Indian influences visible in the architecture of Florida and California, the traces of French and Creole origin in Louisiana, scores of characteristics of language and customs, of family names and place names that seem to have drawn upon the whole known world are part of the variegated pattern that has resulted from weaving Indian, European, oriental, and African into a geographic and national unity. Other divergences, however, reach more deeply into the lives of the people and call for purposeful diversity in public policy, for a nice balancing between national standards and varying local needs.

With the acquisition of Florida, Louisiana, and California, a French-Spanish cultural element came into the Nation, which has been only partly assimilated with the Anglo-Saxon base. The Negro race, which in some ways has been far less assimilated in our social pattern, constitutes about 10 percent of the population and an even larger proportion of the native born. Despite the practical cessation of immigration in the past decade, the human composition of this Nation includes millions of foreign born and millions of children of the foreign born, who are keenly conscious of being in some degree Slavic, Italian, Greek, German, Scandinavian, Spanish-American, or of other "foreign" connection. In variety and importance this ethnic and racial diversity in the United States is a unique phenomenon.

Agricultural and other special-interest blocs in the national legislature reflect deep-seated economic and sectional rivalries. Agriculture and industry are in many ways real competitors within the national economy. At many points this conflict of interest outranks differences that at other times seem to be more fundamental, such as those between employer and employee, native and foreign born, Negro and white, rich and poor.

Our governmental structure represents another aspect of diversity which is only partly counterbalanced by the principle of *e pluribus unum*. We have three levels of government—local, State, and Federal, in the order of their origin—each with a complex history, each with a momentum of its own for growth and power, each changing under stress of political, economic, and social changes. Each State has its distinctive framework and development in State and local government and its own history of relations with the Federal Government.

Even within what came to be the original 13 colonies there was only a limited homogeneity. The signers of the Declaration of Independence and the drafters of the Constitution included landed aristocrats distrustful of

the masses, merchant entrepreneurs suspicious of the aristocratic leaders but without any enthusiasm for government "by the people," clergymen not wholly convinced that Church and State should be separate, philosophers and statesmen burning with democratic zeal, pioneers, soldiers. Even before the founding of the Republic the cleavage of interest and difference in political outlook set agrarian against merchant, Southern planter against Northern banker, independent farmer against large landowner. If the original conflict between South and North tends today to recede into the realm of history and to be redefined into differences on public policy regarding the Negro, other divergences characteristic of the past continue to make for differences in cultural and political groupings.

The American scene of 1940 contains clear-cut sectional divisions, conscious of their divergences, defensive of their rights, each on guard against the others. Not only are there still a South and a North but there is also a West, although with fluctuating and indefinable boundaries, which resists leadership from the East, denying and resenting it in the same breath. Economic and ethnic divisions do not coincide with these geographic units and cannot completely account for them. Political identification is incomplete and undependable. The politically solid South is experiencing infiltration as definitely as the Republican strongholds of the Northeast, without lessening sectional rivalry and economic opposition. And woven through these divergences is the pattern of minority groups—the Negro foremost, the Indian, the Mexican, the foreign born, the Jew, the nonconforming Amish, the Mormon.

Under pioneer conditions in a sparsely settled country substantially independent local units were inevitable and indispensable. Local government has been thought of as most directly implementing the democratic method. The town meeting has been the symbol of democracy. During many years it has been an assumption in political discussions that as government recedes from the local unit to State and Federal levels its democratic character diminishes and control by the people and the electorate shrinks.

Such larger loyalties as there were in our early years attached themselves to the colonies and were transferred to the State governments when they were formed. These colonial loyalties, reinforced if not controlled by economic patterns, largely account for the strong consciousness of statehood that obstructed and delayed the formation of a national government after the Revolutionary War. They persist in modified form in the States that began as colonies, and have their analogue in the State patriotism of the States that have been carved out of other territory.

The Federal Government, being remote as a visible entity from the individual and, in the older parts of the country, the latest variety to come into existence, fell heir to no ready-made loyalties and to a meager program of specific activities. It has had to translate its general functions as defined in the Constitution into concrete terms as suggested by circumstances, and



to wait for loyalty to develop as its activities received sanction. The history of the Federal Government has been in general one of expanding scope, at varying rates of speed greatly accelerated in recent years.

Changes in the functions of government and redistribution of functions among the three levels—Federal, State, local—have been going on to some extent from the beginning of the Nation's existence, in a piecemeal and opportunistic fashion. Until recent years there had been little tendency to transfer rights or functions outright from local to State or from State to Federal Government. The changes were rather in the direction of regulating or standardizing local activities through supervision by the State or through financial aid carrying with it a degree of oversight, and in extending services of advice and information by State and Federal agencies of government. In the past decade, however, under the pressure of adverse economic conditions, State and Federal governments have assumed functions that had previously been considered the province of local government or of voluntary initiative.

As to administrative problems, the kernel of discussion at present is not so much the traditional conflict between States' rights and the scope of Federal authority as it is the relation between local government on the one hand and central authority, whether State or Federal, on the other. As to the respective financial responsibilities of the three levels of government the present tendency is toward accepting the view that in many fields of service to the people of the United States economic conditions dictate financial aid by the Federal Government to the States and by the States to their local units. Financial participation implies, or at any rate justifies, an interest in the way in which grants or contributions are spent, and so responsibility for standards of service to the individual also tends to be shared by local, State, and Federal governments in a tripartite arrangement.

How far should a national policy recognize the differences that exist and take account of them in adjustments of legislative and administrative programs? What is the national *policy* with regard to children as they constitute members of these divergent groups? Are differences in culture or history to define differences in *well-being*, in opportunity, in safety and health? If one region can afford to do better by its children than another, if one refuses to exert itself as much as another, if one group resists the aspirations pressed by another, are these differences to be honored by the Nation as the very essence of American culture, even when they make for varying standards of care and opportunity for children? What is behind the divergences that determines the inequalities in the chances open to children? Sectional and ethnic diversity? Yes, to some extent. Religious and social stratifications? Yes, these also make a difference. But still more important for the children of America are the variations that arise out of the national economy: Differences between economic strata—the

relatively secure and those living on the edge of economic self-maintenance; differences between urban and rural populations, between white and Negro.

### The Family in American Life

To a large extent the prospects for children in American life depend on what is happening to the American family as an institution. Even before their birth, and certainly through the early formative years of childhood, the family is the most important factor in the lives of most children.

The vast majority of children are members of families. Their world opens up in a family, and they continue to spend most of the hours of the day in or about the home, even after school and playmates have begun to claim a large place in their thoughts and activities. Home and family are the first condition of life for the child. They are first in importance for his growth, development, and education.

*The child has food and shelter if his family has a home and provides food.*

*He is content and happy if he is well, if he has parents and others to love and be loved by.*

*Education begins in the home, where he learns to speak, to walk, to handle things, to play, to demand, to give, to experiment.*

*Religious faith is imparted in the family long before he goes to church.*

*The all-important sense of security and of "belonging" are first and best established in the family circle.*

*Adventure and safety, contentment and rebellion, cooperation, sharing, self-reliance, and mutual aid are family experiences.*

In spite of the great changes which have occurred in family life, especially in cities, there is still no more far-reaching educational institution than the family. It can be a school for the democratic life if we make it so. Standards of conduct may be formed by fear, by example; they may be maintained by authority or by persuasion. It is in the relation of members of the family to one another that the quality of the American democratic way may find opportunity for its most conspicuous realization. Self-sufficiency, enterprise, initiative, and cooperation are virtues sought in children as well as in adults. The democratic family life consists of give and take, with freedom for each individual to express his own interests at the same time that he is tolerant of and helpful to others.

The family in the United States has undergone many changes in the past half century or more, especially in cities. Some of these changes are confusing and lead people to ask whether the family as an institution is itself disintegrating. Many parents have not been able to understand these changes. Many have no criterion for behavior except "the way mother

did," which for some problems is no longer an effective guide. Groundless fears have thus arisen in the minds of many people about the survival or continued preeminence of the family in the life of the child and of society.

The increasing mobility of individuals and groups, wider entry of women into occupations outside the home, new kinds of economic pressure, and the great increase in urbanization are some of the forces whose impact has modified American family life. They have had the effect of making the family a less self-sufficient social and economic unit. Proportionately fewer heads of families now are independent, self-employed. Fewer, also, are the exclusive source of support for the family. Fewer goods for daily use are produced in the home. Ready-made clothing, canned food, and baker's bread have changed ways of doing things for parents and children. The mother no longer spends hours spinning and sewing, but spends hours shopping and choosing. Consumer functions for the family have grown and producer functions have declined. There is less room for cooperation in purchasing commodities in the city than there was for producing them on the farm or in the village.

At the same time the internal structure of the family has also altered. The patriarchal family pattern is less common than in the days when all hands helped father on farm, in store, or in small factory. Mother and father tend to share authority. Adults no longer make all decisions for children and adolescents. The household of three generations living together is less and less common, and when it does occur the head of the family is less likely to be in the oldest generation. Lines of authority within the family are shifting and often are not clear.

This shifting authority can be a beneficial and educational experience for children, if inflexible "obedience" is not held as the most prized virtue. The sort of weakening of the prestige of the father that has been reported in some families during the depression is less likely to occur in the family to which a democratic structure has given flexibility and in which all members take part in discussing common problems and making decisions. Children need to know that the world is changing. If they are included in decisions when adjustments are being made, they can learn to be adaptable without losing their sense of security. The child's relation to parental authority is his first mold—and often the final one—for the attitudes he will bring to society. Authoritarianism in the home may lead the child to continue to seek such absolute leadership to lean upon, or it may promote a spirit of rebellion and a desire to dominate that is foreign to democratic life.

Democratic family life is difficult but it is all the more necessary in view of the modern decentralization of family activities. Members of the family scatter to unrelated jobs, seek their recreation away from home, and seldom carry on projects together as a unit, except perhaps when the children are

small. The Lynds found in "Middletown"<sup>1</sup> that one of the chief sources of friction between parents and children was over who should use the car. What movies are suitable, at what age daughter is old enough to dance in public places are important problems to young people and parents, and the modes for different age groups change so rapidly that rigidity in the attitude of parents may promote conflict or break down their influence with the children altogether.

Potentially these changes in the family create the opportunity for greater fulfillment of its central emotional function and for greater usefulness as a school for democracy. It should be possible, with the knowledge and resources available, for partners in the marriage relationship to bring to it more conscious cooperation and more individual variety, and, for their children, more opportunity for independence, balanced with adequate protection. Far from weakening the place of family life, these changes could enrich its function. There is much evidence that some of this has actually taken place in the United States.

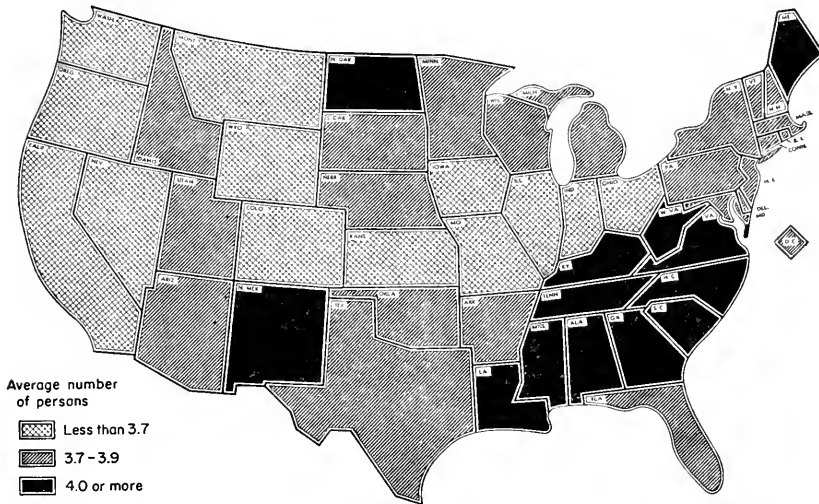
The most striking of the obvious changes in the American family is the well-known decrease in its average size since colonial times, a decrease largely but not exclusively associated with the general urban trend. In 1930 only 58 percent of the urban families had 1 or more children under 21 years of age, as compared with 70 percent of rural-farm families. In urban areas only 10 percent of the families had 4 or more children under 21; in rural-farm areas, nearly 24 percent. In 1930 there were still 5½ million families in the United States that consisted of 6 or more persons. In North Carolina and South Carolina, for example, more than 30 percent of the families consisted of 6 or more persons. Mainly because of variation in degree of urbanization, large families are more common in some regions than in others. Some idea of the disparity in the distribution of families of different sizes in 1940 may be gained from chart 12, which is based on a combination of data on dwellings and on population from the decennial census of 1940.

Size and structure of the family are affected by the competitive pressure of modern life. In consequence of a rising standard of living, children have come to be regarded as an economic liability in many families. Families are larger in the lower than in the higher strata of income, and women who have enjoyed higher educational advantages have fewer children than those who have had less schooling. (See p. 21.) The employment of women, the changed property status that permits married women in the United States to keep their own earnings, and the voluntary limitation of the number of children in many families have doubtless been factors in the decline in size of the average family in the United States, as well as in the increasing frequency of dissolution of the family.

<sup>1</sup> *Middletown*, by Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd, p. 522. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1929.

The mobility of the American family, not in itself either good or bad, has also affected its size and structure. This effect is not easy to measure, and it may not have been an important factor in bringing about changes. But it exists to a considerable degree, is intimately associated with conditions of livelihood, and affects the cultural outlook of the families concerned. In 1930 nearly one-fifth of the rural population and more than one-fourth of the urban population had not been born in the States in which they were living.<sup>2</sup> Many who were living in their native States doubtless had returned after sojourns elsewhere, and many had lived in more than one place within the State. There are, moreover, families who

Chart 12.—Average number of persons per occupied dwelling unit; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population

not only change residence but fail to establish any permanent home. The growth of "trailer families" has been an increasing phenomenon, and the "trailer" may become a permanent dwelling type. Frequent movement from one community to another tends to decrease the strength of ties to neighborhood acquaintances and friends. It is likely to interfere with civic activities, and it lessens the benefits to be derived from school, health agency, and local loyalties. There is, however, little evidence as yet that the cohesive influence and internal loyalties within the family are necessarily affected.

Unemployment has become a factor of far more demonstrable significance for family life. In recent years there have been millions of families in which not a single person was employed. In other families unemploy-

<sup>1</sup> *Abstract of the Fifteenth Census of the United States*, table 51, p. 114. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, 1933.

ment of the principal wage earner has sent mothers and older children to work. In some cases the family's solidarity has been strained by its effort to adjust to relief status, or by having some member other than the head of the family as chief earner, or by continued dependence of unemployed young adults in the family group. The few studies available seem to indicate that families meet these increased strains according to whatever happens to be the pattern of their existing emotional structure. The family with firm emotional ties may increase its solidarity in adversity; the one with basic incompatibilities may be further disrupted.

Against the background of these forces and in the face of internal changes, parents find themselves under the necessity of making ever greater effort to surround their children with an atmosphere of security and self-confidence. This they can do only if they themselves have confidence in the enduring function of the family and willingness to increase the knowledge and skills upon which good family life depends. With happy and rare exceptions, problems of emotional partnership and of cooperative living together are not met wisely without thought and planning. To have the resources that will insure good family life, there must be, in addition to health, enough income to secure the family from anxiety and to assure a self-respecting level of living. To maintain this level without deterioration requires knowledge and planning. Psychological adjustments also are necessary, particularly in the family with only one or two children, in which both man and wife are "individuals" in their own right, often with distinct civic, professional, and social interests.

Ability to plan and support a home is important for a sound relationship of parents to children. In addition, knowledge of the physical and psychological growth cycles of the child is necessary. Parents must be able to let children find their pace and to provide a favorable environment for learning. A child needs to understand himself, physically and emotionally, and parents can aggravate or minimize the difficulties in his struggle to discover the world and himself.

Under the guidance of his parents and brothers and sisters, the child develops motor control, the ability to adapt himself to new situations, the use of words, and a working relationship with others. If assisted wisely and not interfered with unduly, children find their individual rhythms and normal developmental patterns. Too often adults block the adjustment by hurrying the child, by expecting too high a level of performance, or by giving too much assistance. Instead of taking time to create joint activities, parents are apt, under the pressures of modern life, merely to make concessions of time. Too often they do not know what the normal expectations are at successive age levels.

One danger is that in the effort to maintain family life unchanged the family may be thought of as more important than all other institutions, rather than as one of a variety of institutional influences on the child.

"Blood is thicker than water" is an old tradition, and from its spirit have grown unrealistic attitudes toward relationships within the family and toward relationships of its members to outside groups. In such a tradition children are expected to love parents or brothers and sisters without question and without interpretation.

By and large, American families have shown a remarkable capacity to accommodate themselves to this changing atmosphere. Not least among the helpful influences to this end have been the wider understanding of child psychology, of the complicated tapestry of emotional relations between parent and child, and the resulting readiness of parents to respect the personality of the child—to recognize that he has individuality, tastes, and preferences. This attitude makes it easier to help the child recognize the concessions necessary to group living, to provide him with a group of companions until he is able to find his own, to help him know in cooperative and natural relationships people who are different, to help him respect the rights of others who are different—in other words, to arouse the social sense of the child. This is the task of the family.

But its task does not end there. Family life as a whole must be integrated with the life of the community, through appropriate and perhaps changing participation in and sharing of responsibility for the larger life of the community. Only in that way can a child be ready to outgrow his family, to take his place as a cooperative and responsible member of wider social groups.

## **The National Economy**

The economic history of the United States has been in the main one of increasing prosperity and wealth. Successive discoveries of rich natural resources in gold, oil, and land, combined with the restless energy of the pioneer and exploited with all the tools of a rushing industrial and technological revolution, have produced a force of irresistible strength to which panics and depressions are but tenuous obstacles. For years the flood of advancing prosperity seemed to feed upon itself. It tended to bring rising standards of living as the demand for labor lifted wages. This economic surge was borne upon a rising tide of population whose sustained increase had taken on the appearance almost of natural law. Few recognized that this phenomenal growth in numbers was unique, possibly not permanent, and that it was a factor of explicit importance in the expansion of wealth. At breath-taking speed this agricultural land became a land of mines and factories, and exports added still more consumers to the fast-increasing population of the country itself.

Accompanying this phenomenal economic growth certain popular convictions came into being and became axioms of our national culture. Among these were, that this land is one of limitless possibilities, that any man may amass a fortune, that the outposts of wealth are determined only

by our capacity to produce, that the captain of industry is the symbol and creator of national prosperity, that individualism is the key to success.

It is difficult for us to believe that there has been a change in this picture of economic America, that the depression of the thirties was anything more than a temporary setback. But the economic scene has been continuously changing in its basic structure, especially since the turn of the century, and at an increasing tempo in recent decades. These changes directly affect the national economy and therefore the livelihood of families. Child welfare and the conditions of democratic life no less than economic planning are influenced by them.

In the first place the phenomenal growth of consuming power in America that occurred during the nineteenth century appears to have been checked. Consuming power ultimately determines production, and production is the direct means of creating wealth for capital, labor, and government. The consuming power resides in the population of the country itself. During the past five decades, particularly during the last three, the rate of our population growth has diminished to an extent hardly realized except by specialists (chart 13). The more recent reduction has been due both to restricted immigration and to a widespread decline in the birth rate. If the population of the United States had increased in the 30 years since 1910 at the same rate as in the 30 years before 1910, we should have had in 1940 a population of more than 168,000,000 instead of 131,700,000. This would mean about 37,000,000 more than the actual number of consumers in the United States at present.

Other things being equal, a declining rate of growth of the population, that is, of consumers, would be reflected in a slackening of the demand upon agriculture, mining, textiles, and other industries, a slowing of the tempo for production. This would affect not only such necessities of life as staple foods, fuel, possibly shelter, but also all commodities and services.

It is true, of course, that consuming power can be increased almost indefinitely by raising the plane of living. Even food expenditures can be advanced beyond anything that mere quantity would suggest. As income increases consumers use more meats and more fowl, lamb, and beef instead of pork; more dairy products, especially cream, cheese, and eggs; more fruits and vegetables and other vitamin-rich foods.<sup>3</sup> Clothing, housing, equipment, luxuries, services are fields for practically indefinite expansion of consumer power. But this can be made possible only by increased purchasing power, and that must come from higher income to workers in industry, trade, and agriculture.

Even more significant, possibly, than the declining rate of population growth, is the fact that the percentage of "gainful workers" in the total population has been steadily increasing, or stated in another way, there

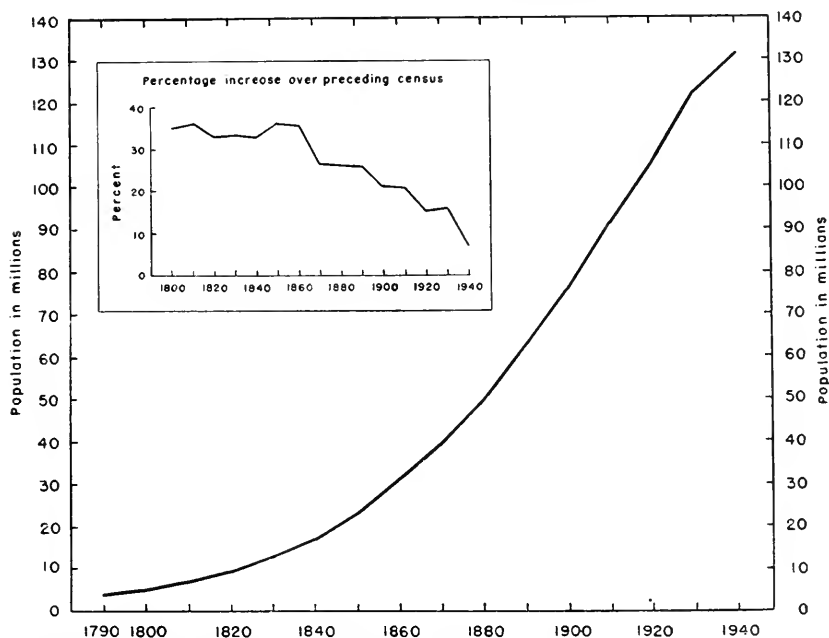
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<sup>3</sup> See reports and releases of the Surplus Marketing Administration (U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington), and *Consumer Expenditures in the United States* (National Resources Committee, Washington, 1939).



are relatively more "producers" to carry on the work of providing goods and services for a given body of consumers. With reduction in the birth rate the age distribution of the population has changed—the proportion of persons of working age has risen while the proportion of children has declined. Over half a century there has been an increase in the proportion of the total population classified as "gainful workers"<sup>4</sup> from 30 percent in 1880 to 43 percent in 1939.<sup>5</sup> In 1880, in other words, of every 100

Chart 13.—Population of the United States, 1790–1940, and percentage increase at each census over the preceding census<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on decennial census of population, 1790–1930, and preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population.

persons in the population, 30 were "gainful workers;" in 1939, 43.

For an industrial nation part of its consuming power is represented by its foreign markets, and for awhile this outlet was a substantial addition to the domestic consuming power of our own population. Rapid industrialization has been the most striking characteristic of American production, and exports have constituted much of the outlet for its products. But other countries have also been undergoing industrialization, and frequently their lower cost of production has interfered with expansion of American exports. The United States is but one of a number of industrial

<sup>4</sup> Wage earners, salaried employees, and self-employed individuals.

<sup>5</sup> *Productivity, Wages, and National Income*, by Spurgeon Bell, p. 9. Brookings Institution, Washington, 1940.

nations competing with others for foreign markets and therefore forced to find larger markets within rather than outside its boundaries.

The constriction in foreign markets in recent years was accentuated by the fact that the World War and its aftermath created a temporary and artificial market for agricultural and industrial products that later contracted through a combination of causes: Subsidence of demand for agricultural products, equipment, and munitions by warring nations; entry of competitors into the market; and the financial and monetary difficulties of foreign debtors and our own unique position as post-war creditor.

Had we recognized the significance of the change in the rate of growth of our population as an established trend rather than a temporary accident, and had we been able and willing to change our scheme of production to match the change in demand, then perhaps the effect of this fundamental alteration in national life would not have contributed so seriously to the stunning economic debacle that began in 1929. But on the contrary, productive capacity was increased at a rate exceeding the rate of growth of the population. This increase in productivity, due principally to machinery and technological improvements, has been going on for many years both in agriculture and in industry. To a limited extent, but only to such extent, it has been counterbalanced by the growth of new industries or the expansion of older ones. Automobiles, radio and telephone, transportation, electrical appliances, and service industries are examples of the former. Road building is an outstanding example of the latter.

To illustrate the progress in productivity it has been shown that 72 men engaged in industrial occupations in 1935 could produce as much as did 100 men in 1920.<sup>6</sup> For a constant volume of industrial production, therefore, 28 men would presumably have been thrown out of work in the course of the 15 years. With the decreasing rate of growth of the population and the increase in the proportion of the population constituting "gainful workers" an increase in unemployment might logically be expected. And as we know but too well, that is exactly what happened.

In agriculture comparisons are available for a longer period. They are equally significant. Over the fifty-odd years from 1878-82 to 1928-32 the amount of labor required to produce a given amount of wheat, corn, and cotton was reduced 62 percent, 42 percent, and 23 percent, respectively.<sup>7</sup> In other words, 38 men in 1928-32 could produce as much wheat, 58 men as much corn, and 77 men as much cotton, as 100 men, respectively, half a century earlier. Unless demand for the product is proportionately increased, increased productivity of labor in any occupation results in less employment and fewer people with income, purchasing power, or capacity to become effective consumers.

<sup>6</sup> *Technological Trends and National Policy*, table 3, p. 72. National Resources Committee, Washington, June 1937.

<sup>7</sup> Estimated amounts of man labor used to produce 100 bushels of wheat, 100 bushels of corn, and one 500-pound gross-weight bale of cotton (*ibid.*, table 10, p. 101).

For all but a fraction of the population purchasing power comes from wages, salaries, and farming. It depends on employment in industry, commerce, personal service and government service, and on adequate prices and a good market in agriculture. The so-called depression began with a crash in the banking and investment world in 1929 and was followed by cuts in wages, reductions in working time, dismissals, and shut-downs. But the unemployment inherent in the disharmony of productivity, consuming power, and changing population was discernible much earlier, certainly as early as 1920. Even a partial analysis of this trend and of the difficulties encountered in attempting a "recovery" leads to the inevitable conclusion that we must deal not with a temporary recession but with major symptoms of fundamental changes in the structure of the national economy. The characteristics of these changes, insofar as they influence the economic welfare of families and of children and must be taken into account in planning the future economy of the Nation, will be discussed in somewhat greater detail in Chapter VI. These changes are part of the American scene of 1940, and are as important for children in a democracy as for economic planning.

## Rural Economy

The problems of rural life in America have been studied and publicized by a variety of interested persons and groups: Farmers, economists, educators, church bodies, novelists, labor leaders, government officials. Much has been done in recent decades to change and improve country life. Better methods of production, introduction of labor-saving devices, improved marketing, and other ways of raising the economic level of the farmer have been of first importance. Modern roads, automobiles, mail-order catalogs, telephone, and radio have brought farm and town together in physical accessibility and in thought and outlook. The flow of people back and forth between city and country has increased, and the sharp contrast between urban and rural cultures is diminishing. Today rural America differs from urban America less in the way of life than in economic condition, less in what families want for their children in city and in country than in their ability to provide them. Rural America is far poorer than urban America.

Romantic notions about rural life, derived from literary idylls of the French, German, and English village, hindered the speeding American civilization from taking stock of the differences in opportunity that were arising between city and country child. The history of rural America presents a unique development. Unlike these cultural patterns of continental literature, village life with its amenities and communal activities has had little part in that history, especially in the earlier decades, even in New England, the chief native source of rural romance. The tradition of the

In the South, for example, the domestic "overhead" necessary to maintain the life of landed aristocrats, as well as differences in crops, labor supply, and methods of farming, made for a rural life very different from that of New England or of the pioneers in the Middle West. Farmers settling in the Southwest on land added to the United States by purchase and conquest were often weighed down with the type of proprietary rights held by wealthy owners as individuals or corporations that had been char-

acteristic of some of the earlier history of the colonies. Much of the bitter recent history of the small farmer and seasonal laborer in the fruit and cotton industries of California has also been traced to this baronial land-ownership dating back to the origin of that State.<sup>8</sup>

\* *Factories in the Field*, by Carey McWilliams, p. 7. Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1939.

devoted to this expansion. Even the interest in hunting and fishing that carried over from pioneer days helped to keep families apart. Rigorous denominational discipline tended in many places to bring group activities other than religious meetings and revivals into disfavor. Meanwhile, the conquest of the frontier progressed and the pattern of outpost and pioneer continued to retard community life and cooperative living. The benefits derived from village life, from church and school as focuses of interest, from the habit of coming together to discuss public affairs and sharpen interest in the life of mind and spirit were therefore slow in coming to the American farmer, except insofar as the New England town meeting approximated this form of community life.

Many attempts have been made to mitigate the loneliness of rural life through the Grange, State and county agricultural extension work with its meetings and 4-H clubs, consolidated schools, county fairs, "sings," and occasional political campaigns that have aroused interest or prejudice. Good roads and cheap automobiles have done wonders in overcoming the isolation of rural Americans. The spread of factories and mills over the land has had somewhat the same effect. Improvement in schools has helped.

Life in the country does have important assets that can make it in many respects superior to life in the city. Dwellings are usually single houses surrounded by ample space. Hundreds of deeply satisfying experiences come to the child as he learns to know the outdoors. The tempo of living is more serene, and the level of living can be higher on the same income than in the city. Isolation is being overcome at an increasing rate. The town becomes accessible, but not an inescapable presence. Ideas no longer fall into separate patterns, urban and rural, and the rural mind is absorbing much of what it cares to select from the product of gregarious living.

The real difficulty with the rural civilization of our day in the United States is that it rests on a deficiency economy of the farmer. This necessarily means limited resources for the rural community—county, township, village—to supplement the insufficient means of the farmer. The building of roads and the production of the amenities of life calculated to improve material living on farm and in village have been partly deflected by the inherent and continuing poverty of the agricultural population.

Certain recent developments have tended to intensify the difficulties of this situation. On the one hand, greater productivity through labor-saving devices and technological advances in agriculture have rendered our resources too abundant for domestic consumption on the basis of present purchasing power, thus lowering prices and reducing income of the farmer. At the same time, market conditions introduce price fluctuations to which agriculture, because of its dependence upon seasons and weather, cannot adjust itself as factory production might. Quoted prices of cotton, for example, have fluctuated since 1927 between 20 cents and 6 cents a

pound.<sup>9</sup> Wheat rose from about 80 cents a bushel at the beginning of the World War to more than \$2 at its close, and averaged 38 cents in 1932.<sup>10</sup> In a decentralized industry such as farming, defense against price fluctuations, whether they are due to manipulation or to unavoidable forces, is almost impossible. Unless assisted by government or organized in cooperative enterprises far beyond any in sight in the United States, the farmer is helpless in coping with prices.

At the same time there has been a tremendous loss to the country in the natural resources available for farming. Various estimates of the loss of soil from erosion indicate that the equivalent of several Midwestern States in area has been lost irreparably, as a result, in large measure, of the unintelligent conversion of prairie lands into agricultural crop acreage without suitable protection.<sup>11</sup> This waste of natural resources unfortunately is not compensated for by the overproduction on the land under cultivation as measured by consumer purchasing power in 1940. Although much of this lost acreage is not needed for production at this time, the farmer who is ruined by exhaustion or erosion of the soil is not benefited by the fact that another farmer elsewhere can more than make up for the lost production and, indeed, contribute to the lowering of prices that completes the ruin of the marginal farmer.

### Agricultural Migrants

A distressing development in rural life that has become conspicuous during the depression, one particularly menacing to the well-being of children, is the emergence of the migrant agricultural family. Farming has been an economically hazardous occupation in the United States, chiefly because of the low and uncertain income it affords. But there have been other hazards also; farming has not been characterized by that stability and firm-rootedness that we like to associate with agriculture. Farming and migration have gone hand in hand in this country since its early settlement. The farming population has spread out from at least three geographic centers and has developed several types of agricultural industry. Farmers of New England and other North Atlantic States moved by way of New York, Pennsylvania, and the Midwest toward the Northwest, extending and developing a diversified food-crop agriculture: Wheat, corn, hogs, dairy products. The South created cotton and tobacco agriculture and extended this type of farming through the Southern belt to the Southwest and toward the Pacific. Cattle, then sheep and horses—

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<sup>9</sup> *Report on Economic Conditions of the South*, p. 45. Prepared for the President by the National Emergency Council. Washington, 1938.

<sup>10</sup> *Agricultural Statistics 1939*, table 1, pp. 9-10. U. S. Department of Agriculture. Washington, 1939.

<sup>11</sup> See *Agricultural and Forest Land*, by O. E. Baker (*Recent Social Trends in the United States*, Vol. 1, ch. 2, pt. 2, pp. 90-121; McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1933) and *Report on Economic Conditions of the South*, pp. 11-12.

the pastoral industries—partly originated in and largely characterized the Pacific Coast and Far Western States and overlapped into the Southwest. Fruit, sugar beets, vegetables, poultry, on the whole, became industrialized types later and in part were centered in limited areas: California, Oregon, Colorado, Florida, Michigan.

Each of these types and centers of agriculture tended to promote migration. Land hunger in one case, soil exhaustion in another, in still others soil erosion and inappropriate farming technology, speculation in land, faulty financial structure, adventuring into new fields of little-understood products—all these have contributed to keeping the farmer on the move. Generally speaking, it was the overflow of farmers that moved, leaving behind a growing population. But this has not been the case everywhere. There are tobacco-growing counties in Tidewater Virginia now with populations less than in 1790.<sup>12</sup>

In this moving stream farmer and farm laborer are sometimes distinct; at other times, they are part of an indistinguishable flood—pioneer, entrepreneur, ruined farmer seeking a new life, “get rich quick” farmer planning to make a fortune from virgin soil or new types of crops. These earlier farm movements had a creative character and a semblance of stability in that in most cases they moved *to* something rather than *from* it. They planned to build both individual security and a pattern of communal life. Church, trading post, store, sheriff, bank, school were parts of the pattern. Or else it was range or manor, or employment as farm hand in an established order of agriculture, known and understood.

Because of the hazards of agriculture, failure of the individual farmer has always been a high possibility, and there has been usually a sort of sequence in the conditions of failure. Generally speaking, it has been failure of the individual rather than failure of whole areas. Farmer may become hired laborer or tenant or sharecropper, or he may, as an individual, move elsewhere and try to start over again; if plantation owner, he may become bankrupt like any other business man. In the life of the farmer, individual by individual, the uncertainties of agriculture keep a strain of nomadic necessity. Some of these failures are strikingly recorded in statistics; others are merely remembered experience. The descent from farm ownership to tenancy is one of the statistical records of failure. In this respect, as in most aspects of the economic condition of the farmer, the South has been the chief sufferer.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *The Problems of a Changing Population*, p. 18. National Resources Committee, Washington, May 1938.

<sup>13</sup> This transformation, due to the hazards of agriculture, is shown in the following table from *Technological Trends and National Policy* (p. 141):

*Tenant Farmers—Percentage of All Farmers, 1880–1935*

	<i>In the United States</i>	<i>In the Cotton Belt</i>
1880 .....	25.6	40.0
1900 .....	35.3	52.1
1920 .....	38.1	55.2
1930 .....	42.4	61.3
1935 .....	42.1	58.4

In recent years a new kind of agricultural movement has begun: Mass migration of farmers dislodged from their homes and livelihood by the combined and cumulative hazards of soil exhaustion, financial reverses, dust storms, overproduction, and industrialization of agriculture. This new migration has been different in many ways from the hopeful conquest of the wilderness of a hundred years ago. It has been escape from defeat rather than pursuit of ambition. It has been facilitated and stimulated, moreover, by certain developments in agricultural economics and technology. The development of cotton and fruit raising into large-scale industries—"factories in the field"—has converted part of agriculture into an intensely seasonal occupation requiring concentration of large numbers of workers at given places for brief periods and offering practically no work for the rest of the year. This development has served to syphon the ruined or dispossessed farmer into the reservoir of seasonal agricultural labor.

There is no accurate information, and there are wide differences in estimates, as to the total number of interstate agricultural migrants. The most common estimate is 350,000 families at any one time. Estimates of all workers changing their place of residence from State to State to secure seasonal employment in agriculture are as high as 1,000,000 or more.<sup>14</sup> It is estimated that more than half the area of the United States is involved,<sup>15</sup> if we include territory from which the families are forced out by agricultural necessity as well as the places to which they go at the beckoning of seasonal demand for labor.

The farmer and his family forced from their land, seeking a living, and offering the labor of himself, his wife, and his children to the demands of industrialized agriculture, confront a new, complicated, and baffling condition. Lured to California, to Arizona, and to other States, sometimes deliberately, sometimes by rumors, he exhausts his slender means in getting there. Wages tend to be low, periods of labor short, movement haphazard. His family is underfed, exposed to disease. The children do not stay in one place long enough for school; the adults do not stay long enough to exercise their rights of citizenship. Housing is usually miserable, whether provided by employer or improvised in shanty towns by the migrants themselves. These families are among the best prospects for disease.<sup>16</sup>

The attitude of States and communities toward the migrants has varied from indifference to fear and hostility on the part of some and to efforts to help on the part of others. In the course of the efforts to help, information has accumulated about the families themselves—information which is often

<sup>14</sup> *Migrant Farm Labor; the problem and some efforts to meet it*, p. 3. Farm Security Administration, Washington, 1940.

<sup>15</sup> *Migrant Farm Labor*, by Frederick R. Soule, p. 4. Farm Security Administration, San Francisco, 1938.

<sup>16</sup> A great deal of valuable material on the migration of families is included in *Interstate Migration; Report of the Select Committee To Investigate the Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens* (John H. Tolan, chairman) pursuant to H. Res. 63, 491, 629, 76th Cong., and H. Res. 16, 77th Cong. (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1941).



at variance with the impressions of those who attempt merely to be rid of the problem.

The migrant agricultural family is really a family, not just a group of laborers. A study of 6,655 such families in California showed that 36 percent of the 24,485 persons included were children under 15, and 9 percent more were between 15 and 19.<sup>17</sup> The children bear the full brunt of the deprivations that migrant families suffer. Nearly two-thirds of the children in these families were in families of 5 or more persons, up to 10 or more—the old-fashioned American rural family, now on wheels instead of on their own land.

To meet this complicated and deplorable situation, there have been instances of individual employers acting as enlightened and public-spirited citizens. There has been the beginning of effective labor organization. Intelligent planning to meet the public-health problems involved has been attempted by at least one State authority. The Federal Government has recognized the interstate and even national aspects of the problem and has assisted in numerous ways, through the Farm Security Administration, in providing housing, health service, school space, and indirectly in giving protection from exploitation. To the extent that these services have rescued families from distress and disease, this is another example of the competence of this democracy to adjust its instrumentalities of government to the needs of the people.

However, neither the legal nor the economic problems of agricultural migrants nor the problems of health and schooling for their children can be handled by the States to which they go, as their exclusive burden and responsibility. The potential benefits of labor organization are seriously handicapped by unsympathetic employer organizations and unenlightened local public opinion. Such protection against unemployment, old age, and disabling accident as has been provided for industrial employees is not available for these workers, adult or child. Meanwhile, close to half a million children lack assurance of adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, in families representing on the whole farmers of excellent work habits, farmers for generations back.

Measures designed to meet the serious danger to the well-being of children in migrant families are both of immediate and of long-range types. Recommendations of this Conference are in agreement with recommendations that have frequently been made by students of the problem and by public officials having responsibility in the field. The coming decade should see this threat to thousands of children disappear forever.

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<sup>17</sup> *A Study of 6,655 Migrant Households in California, 1938.* Farm Security Administration, San Francisco, 1939

## Depression and War

Much that is important in the American scene as it affects the welfare and future of the American child is tangible; much of it is American history as known to the average citizen. The history of this country, of its political and social structure, is constantly being interpreted in literature, in the press, from platform and pulpit. But the attempt to see the future in the light of the past and to judge the significance of present events in shaping the future is more difficult than merely learning about the past. Yet it is important, for it has a practical bearing on action and must be part of the citizen's habit of thought.

Of current factors that may prove to have great influence in shaping the future of the child in this country—and that means the future of the country—two seem to be most important and least easy to estimate. One is the depression; the other, the war.

The depression has beaten deep into our national consciousness. For 10 years, until recent months, it was a constant presence in the public mind. Through its manifestations in unemployment and restricted profits it was the central feature in political thinking and controversy. Hardly a social or political question was discussed, hardly a program devised, that did not take it into account. On some persons, at times at least, its effect has been pessimism and discouragement; on others, rebellious resentment against unknown causes. Some continued to look for the return of good times any day. But the general belief of the early thirties that the depression was a temporary phase in the familiar course of a business cycle began to wane, and the possibility of a new and perhaps different economic era began to assume a semblance of reality. Pride and assurance in the dominance of material things, the sense of unlimited opportunities for wealth, achievement, and happiness have been shaken, at least temporarily.

For millions of the population some form of public assistance has been a recognized necessity and the expected way of subsistence. For millions, the growing structure of social insurance has begun to represent the tangible promise of a modicum of security against loss of income. A manifold and pervasive system of public measures for the relief of the unemployed has been developed. The volume of government expenditures for these purposes and its accompanying features of public borrowing and increased taxes were by 1940 no longer widely resented. Both direct and indirect taxes have become familiar.

Political theories that involve a far-reaching readjustment between government and private enterprise have become a part of the daily intellectual fare in public discussions of economics and politics. Control of agricultural production in order to safeguard prices, Federal credit to farmers to prevent bankruptcy and to supply funds not available on the basis of traditional financing, adjustments in the export and import program

of agriculture, and direct assistance in varied forms through the Farm Security Administration have been established to relieve, rehabilitate, and resettle farmers. The cost of these activities, many of which are assuming permanent form, has become a major factor in American politics and economics.

Philanthropy is no longer the hope and "salvation" of the poor. In the shadow of the tremendous public expenditures and of governmental bodies carrying on activities previously associated with philanthropy, its significance and public influence have shrunk. Planning of public welfare is no longer so much a matter of planning for the period "until the depression is over;" imperceptibly we have come to plan for years that are continuous with and may take their character from conditions defined by the depression.

Whatever is to happen to the child in America in the next 10 years will be affected both by the conditions imposed by the depression and by the measures which the Nation, particularly the Federal Government, has devised and developed for meeting those conditions.

The war shadows represent a new phenomenon whose importance cannot be appraised. It may outstrip in significance all that the depression has meant; it may in the end emphasize and aggravate the depression. It may have the contrary effect, by providing an extraordinary stimulus for production and employment; or it may have effects quite unpredictable. In the interest of child welfare we must be on guard against the effects of war psychology when they threaten the commonplaces of democracy—respect for the individual and observation of the Bill of Rights. We must be on guard against the danger of exploiting war and of converting defense of the land into the destruction of democracy and, with it, the essentials of child welfare.

## **An American Culture**

The phenomenal advance in the material and technological civilization of this country, combined with rapid population growth and the evolution of American democracy, has been creating almost a new world as well as a new Nation. At the same time vital and steady progress had been made also in the less spectacular phases of American culture—in education, health, leisure-time activities, racial tolerance, political morality, the arts, public administration, the use of inventions to advance civilized life. The principal features of this cultural advance are well known both to the specialist and to the general public.

In the field of education we have attained a standard which assumes high-school opportunities to be part of the rightful preparation of every child. Individualization of the educational process has become a fundamental tenet in our pedagogy, and to this end special methods and facilities are being provided to an increasing extent for the crippled or handicapped

child, the mentally retarded or exceptionally bright child, the sick child, the problem child. School curricula are being adjusted to modern life, classes are becoming smaller, rigidity of programs is being diminished, and recreation, civic participation, health education, art, and music are coming to be integral parts of the school program. The school is reaching out also to the graduate, to the adult, and to the community, and is offering a variety of educational opportunity not only in cities but also in rural and village communities.

In preventive medicine, public-health measures, and medical treatment great strides have been made in arousing public interest, in achieving administrative progress, and in the conduct of research both by governmental bodies and by private institutions. The remarkable reductions in the death rates for children and in those from preventable diseases such as diphtheria and tuberculosis represent almost a new era in well-being and in elimination of fear and unhappiness—especially unhappiness, since it comes so often through death and disease.

Different in kind is the type of cultural progress in which a prominent feature is the welfare of one's fellow, rather than merely one's own welfare and that of one's family. One example is racial and religious tolerance; another, political morality and democratic responsibility. No one will claim the millenium, and the data in the following chapters show many shady patches. Yet progress is being made along many lines. Lynchings are far fewer, organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan find less fertile ground, opposition to discrimination is more vocal and more effective. Few responsible students of our political life will deny that outright corruption in politics is diminishing, and that, through improved administrative methods, wider public knowledge, and the expansion of the merit system, the conduct of public affairs is tending in the direction of scientific management.

Much of this progress is due to education and to the free press. Much of it is effected through civic organizations, local and national. No little responsibility must be assigned to the deliberate efforts of agencies created and led by public-spirited men and women for the purpose of studying and influencing local government. It is impossible to gauge how great an influence for civic improvement has been wielded both directly and indirectly by the labor movement, with its insistent focusing of public attention upon the condition of the masses and the goals of democracy. In quite a different way, but with undoubtedly far-reaching effect, the greater understanding of human behavior absorbed by the public from the discoveries of psychology and from the programs promoted by social workers has smoothed the path between citizen and expert, voter and public servant, beneficiary of welfare activities and the body of citizens.

Some of these cultural developments are peculiar to the United States or to America. Others have made greater progress in some of the western

nations of Europe and Asia. At any rate progress in those phases of cultural life that are less geographically conditioned than material welfare, and with respect to which the civilized world has many common characteristics, has been great and varied in the past few decades, and this progress is an essential part of the American scene of 1940.

*Thought and Feeling of the People.*

The thoughts and feelings of people are inextricably involved with material conditions in shaping the setting of their lives. Ideas and feelings are the forces that make laws, change them, repeal them. The result of the thinking and feeling of the people becomes "public opinion." Support of government, administration of laws, the conduct of public affairs in general depend as much on public opinion as do customs, manners, and the maintenance of folkways.

The character of a child-welfare program will be determined by what is thought and what is felt about children, their rights and safety, their future, their place among adults, their role in the family. But opinions on child welfare do not stand by themselves; they are interwoven with ideas about other phases of human relationship. Articulate public opinion, in press, pulpit, and literature, does not always, it is true, reflect the real feelings and thoughts of the people. Public opinion may be misrepresented by those in control of its expression. It may even be deliberately distorted and misled. Feelings may be created and ideas may be imposed in a manner that makes the distinction between education and propaganda difficult to maintain. In the long run, however, the opinion of the masses of the people, whether independently arrived at or artfully fabricated, does constitute that cultural background upon which the pattern of child welfare is worked, from which it must be deciphered.

What are the more important currents and conformations of public opinion in America that bear on child welfare either directly or indirectly? We shall look in vain for clear and simple truths of universal application. Yet despite obscuring exceptions, the large lines are unmistakable and dominant.

The American truly believes that "all men are created equal," as well as free. This is the keystone of his definition of democracy. Wherever the issue is clearly perceived, he has no hesitancy. He rejects privilege gained through birth or inheritance and resents the concept of "one's betters." On this unquestioning faith that "all men are born free and equal," American culture has built its belief in individualism—the belief that all men are indeed equal by right, but that any man, if free, may excel through ability or natural endowment, for that is not a man-made denial of equality. Therefore the self-made man is the very proof and symbol of freedom and of equality, and the fruits of ambition are regarded as sacred. American public opinion has been resistant to what it regards as too much governmental regulation, to restraint of competition, to

trends toward "socialization." It has accepted conservation of resources, antitrust laws, interstate-commerce regulation rather on the theory that they assure free enterprise than that they are forms of cooperative national planning.

Public opinion in this country still believes wholeheartedly in the "unalienable" right of the individual to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." No amount of repetition has dulled this phrase into a hackneyed commonplace or destroyed its power to awaken deep faith and devotion. The same may be said of the rights of freedom of speech, religion, press, and public assembly. Certain other ideas embodied in the Constitution have also become part of the quality of public thought and feeling. Considerable stir can still be created if threats are perceived to the "independence of legislative, executive, and judiciary powers" or if encroachments are made upon States' rights.

Political developments abroad since the World War have strengthened and intensified American devotion to the unforgettable phrases of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. But no solicitous observer of the events of recent years can fail to recognize that some inroads are being made on the public mind as to the sacredness of these rights. Some attempts have been made to curtail freedom of speech, press, and assembly, through drives upon public opinion to the effect that they endanger "peace, prosperity, and the American form of government." There has often been a conflict in the minds of many Americans: They want the Bill of Rights held inviolate but think that it may be possible to do so only by violating it in certain cases and for certain types of opinions. This has been a feature of American public opinion and part of the paradox that confuses education with propaganda.

On some things there has been surprisingly little change in public opinion from colonial days to the present. Some are of fundamental importance, others are reflections of the material progress and the characteristics of the Nation. Certain convictions of natural superiority continue to exist despite their inconsistency with the theory of equality. The white man regards himself as superior to the black and the yellow; the Anglo-Saxon as better than eastern European. These distinctions tend to parallel similar notions relating to economic strata: Business man and white-collar worker are held superior to laborer. Discriminations against minority groups, both in practice and in statutory provisions, are frequently exercised, and many of these groups are kept from full entry into the democratic life of the Nation.

A lapse, such as this, from the principles of Jefferson and Lincoln helps subversive forces in their attempt to undermine the fundamental democratic tenets of the Nation. It is an emotional parasite that threatens the vitality and vigor of democratic convictions and institutions. If many children of the Nation succumb to the insidious charms of the assertions

of superiority, our educational system will be burdened increasingly with the tremendous task of undoing much spiritual damage, of building citizenship in a democracy on resistive soil, against deep-rooted habits of thought and feeling. And our educational system is the chief foundation of democracy in the United States.

Outside the family, the school is recognized in the United States as the chief instrument of civilization. It is the instrument used by State, community, and church for the maintenance, extension, and creative development of culture. Unlike the family or religious faith, the educational system is completely subject to deliberate creation on explicit principles and theories as formulated in a given culture. Books, the arts, religion, music, and the theater are all part of an educational system, but the school is its heart and center.

Free public schools have become the foundation of our educational system. It is axiomatic in this country that every child is entitled to free education. The schools are the instruments of enlightenment, the free and necessary right of every child. More than a hundred years of development have added to this essential public opinion a number of other ideas of more or less general acceptance. Many of these ideas are technical and administrative in nature; others have some general social significance. But all reflect in some way public thought and feeling. It is now assumed that schools have responsibility beyond teaching the three R's; they must build character, prepare for citizenship and for jobs, develop physical fitness, facilitate play and recreation, sensitize their pupils to arts, crafts, and culture. Public opinion has tended to bring school and community life more closely together through parent-teacher organizations and through a wider use of the school plant for civic and public purposes—for adult education and community functions. Instruction in hygiene and supervision of the health of the child have become recognized as school functions. High school has become recognized as part of the "education" every child is entitled to. And in recent years a tremendous movement has tended to impose the obligation upon the school to utilize all its opportunities, in organizations, practice, pedagogy, and community contacts, to spread the theories and habits of democratic living. This is now accepted as part of public opinion.

Some characteristics of thought and feeling in the United States are so general as to escape notice by their very universality. Yet they affect the conditions that surround the child and must be reckoned with in measures proposed for the welfare of children in a democracy. If there is truth in the allegation that this country is money-minded—and that is a very elusive concept to evaluate—it is also true that there is a fundamental largesse in our expenditures that makes the development of high standards of living possible in public as in private life. By and large our economic habits are not of a penny-pinching type—as indeed they hardly could be

with our history of almost incredible resources and expansion. Children have an appeal above all others, and the purse strings, never very tight, have been more ready to loosen for child welfare than for most other appeals.

Women have a place in our culture probably beyond parallel in geography or history. They wield or have power to wield an influence hardly yet recognized. In politics, civic reform, community enterprises, school programs, welfare activities, women's organizations have enormous power. They are and have been effective forces in shaping realistic measures in public welfare, especially in matters concerning the child. Organized or unorganized, women's public opinion is a force of incalculable strength for the welfare of the child. To an appreciable extent the organized interest of women, with its civic orientation, is supplementing and, in some ways, is stepping into the place of philanthropy as an effective cultural rudder and motive power.

One of the most important aspects of public opinion as it influences the American scene and specifically affects the program for child welfare in our democracy is the nature of thought and feeling on government and politics. Much of what has been proposed by the present White House Conference depends upon government action—local, State, and Federal—for its accomplishment, and upon public officials and employees for execution.

Our democratic system of government presupposes the existence of political parties which determine public policies, and which assume responsibility for selection and promotion of candidates, and for all the labor and expense involved in competitive elections. It is difficult to find both workers and money to support the tremendous cost of campaigns. Elected officials and the parties which they represent count among the satisfactions of victory not only the honor of holding office and the remuneration offered in public employment for those elected but also the opportunity to reward their adherents through appointment to lesser positions and the chance to throw business patronage to party supporters.<sup>18</sup>

This is common knowledge. Yet we are often intense, even bitter partisans. We are inclined to regard "the other party" as being controlled by politicians; it is our party that is destined to clean them out. Naturally, then, when the other party is in power, we are inclined to think of "administration" as "politics," and therefore inefficient, wasteful, and extravagant. It would follow then that when the "right" party is in power, administration is regarded as honest and efficient.

There is also still more than a trace of feeling that conflict is inherent in the relations of government and individual enterprise regardless of which

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<sup>18</sup> *Civil Service in Public Welfare*, by Alice Campbell Klein, p. 30. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1940.



party is in power. Our own candidates, when elected, may be considered "regimentation," "bureaucracy." Government is still conceived by many mainly as something that constricts, enforces, taxes, limits, interferes. The tremendous achievement of government following the crash of 1929 in preventing the threatened financial collapse and in building the structure of recovery and relief has not succeeded in dissipating this sentiment.

Yet, during much of our political history we have actually tolerated and condoned dishonesty in politics and in government. Graft and nepotism, inefficiency and official favoritism, universality of "political pull," inferiority of public service have been accepted as if they were laws of nature instead of moral fault or civic shortcoming. And this paradoxical attitude, this confusion between government and politics, has severely encumbered efforts to develop necessary public services and to uphold the work of public officials when it is good or to hold them to high standards of performance.

In a complex civilization, which demands ever stronger and better leadership and more and more varied services from government, such an attitude toward public services and officials cannot go hand in hand with efficiency and vision. When public expenditures mount, as ours have been mounting for both domestic administration and military defense, a different relationship between citizen and government must grow up. And in the field of child welfare, where public services are demanded, created, and expanded in an increasing tempo, public feeling and thinking about government functions and public servants must undergo intelligent and far-reaching reconstruction. That the public attitude has indeed improved and public servants are rapidly gaining the respect of the people is due in no small measure to the actual improvement of public service and to the expansion of the merit system in Federal, State, and even local government units.

These illustrations of elements in public opinion that bear on a program of child welfare in our democracy have been selected as suggestive principally of the newer phases of public feeling and of the fundamental considerations that have affected the selection of proposals by this Conference. Obviously the list is far from comprehensive; different items may seem to others to be more important. In any case the chief function of the illustrations is to emphasize the relevance, for specific problems and programs in behalf of the child, of the background of ideas and feelings that influence and determine our plans of action.

## Chapter IV

### Children in Minority Groups

THE bulk of the report of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy and the greater number of its recommendations deal with services rendered to children or to parents in the interest of children. The scope of interest of the Conference, its concern with the welfare of all children, and the particular attention it wishes to focus on certain disadvantaged portions of the Nation's children are largely reflected in the discussion of those services. It is not easy, however, to give an adequate sense of the difficulties experienced by the children of minority groups or to evaluate the meaning to our democracy of their special disadvantages merely through the medium of discussing pertinent service aspects or even through the preceding brief résumé of the American setting, in which the lesser status of minorities is barely suggested. These children occupy a large and particularly challenging place in our claim of a democratic culture and in our systematic efforts to achieve such a culture.

There is no hard and fast definition of a minority group, as not all groups necessarily suffer discrimination, nor are the children of all minority groups necessarily disadvantaged. But the chances work against them. There are, indeed, few minority groups that are not at a disadvantage in building a happy and efficient environment for their children. Even that most envied and privileged of minority groups—the wealthy—is not without its disadvantages, for contrary to logic and to the patterns of our patriarchal history, the families of the wealthy tend to be too small for educationally effective family life, and the privileged status of the children tends to deprive them of the benefit of democratic training. Most minorities, however, are not characterized by their privileges, but by their deprivations.

Many of these deprivations are experienced directly by the child. He may receive poorer schooling, less opportunity to play, inferior vocational opportunities, inadequate health care, less protection against harmful child labor, less assistance in case of physical or other individual handicaps requiring social services. Other deprivations may come because he shares his family's fortunes. The family in the minority group may suffer chiefly social and occupational disadvantages, as is the case with Jews. But usually these are combined with lower income status, inferior dwellings, and specific discriminations in law and public administration. The outstanding example and chief sufferer from this composite disadvantage of minority status is the

Negro, and to a lesser degree the Indian and the Mexican. In the present report attention will be focused therefore especially on the Negro minority.

Whether experienced by the child directly, or through the vicissitudes of his family, these material deprivations are relatively tangible, almost measurable. There is, however, the more subtle, but no less searing deprivation that comes from the consciousness of being excluded, despised, unwanted, unacceptable; of belonging to parents who are not granted the status of equals among equals in the public esteem. This social rejection not only is theoretically abhorrent to the democratic ideal, but becomes a keenly felt personal rejection by the individual experiencing it.

## Numbers and Groups Among Minorities

How many children in the United States belong to these disadvantaged minority groups, distinguished by race, nationality, culture, or origin? In 1930 approximately 13 million children under 20 years of age were other than native-born white of native parentage. This was more than one-third of the total population in this age group. Of this number approximately 4 million were Negro children; 140,000, Indian; 16,000, Chinese; 58,000, Japanese; 3,000, Filipino; 600,000, Mexican; 335,000, foreign-born white; and nearly 8 million native white of foreign or mixed parentage.<sup>1</sup>

Except Indians, no group can rightly claim to be more American than another. With this exception, "every human being that has ever lived in America has been an immigrant or the descendant of an immigrant," Emil Jordan reminds us.<sup>2</sup> We are all relatively recent arrivals. Furthermore, the process of assimilation has been so rapid that we can no longer accurately trace the lines of racial and national origin in our population.

In 1930 only 57 out of every 100 persons were native whites of native parentage, and many of these were second, third, and fourth generation descendants of the 38 million immigrants who have come to these shores in the past 100 years. Of the other 43 in 100 who were not native whites of native parentage, 20 and a fraction were native white of foreign or mixed (foreign and native) parentage; 11 were foreign-born white; 10 were Negro; 1 was Mexican; and the remaining fraction represented Indian, oriental, and others. Only about 3½ million persons in our entire population were aliens, and many of these were on the way to citizenship.

For many decades we did everything in our power to attract the excess population of the world, and in some years we admitted as many as a million and a half immigrants because we needed them to break our wild lands, build our roads, man our factories, and in general do our heaviest and least well-paid work.

<sup>1</sup> Estimated from reports of the U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1930, Population, Vol. 2, ch. 10. Washington, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> *Americans; a new history of the peoples who settled the Americas*, by Emil L. Jordan, p. 21. W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1939.

Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Hindus, and Mexicans, as well as European immigrants, have been deliberately imported at different times to provide cheap and tractable labor. They were often exploited, and when no longer required they often became objects of hostility and contempt.

Our traditional "open door" policy seems to have lasted only so long as we needed cheap labor from abroad.<sup>3</sup> With the turn of the century increasingly severe restrictions were imposed, and in 1921 immigration from European countries was placed on a quota basis. Citizenship is denied to orientals, except those born in this country. In the main immigrants have come here seeking economic opportunity. There is little to suggest the operation to any appreciable extent of any other basis of selection.<sup>4</sup> Although people in most racial and cultural minorities have reason for being grateful that they are here, this country in turn owes them a great debt of gratitude for the heavy burdens that our immigrants have carried and the contributions that they have made to the material and cultural development of this country. They have earned their right to be here.

Some types of minority status, such as that based on discernible differences in physical type, constitute a greater handicap than others, especially when complicated by low economic status and unfavorable local conditions. Negroes, Indians, Filipinos, West Indians, orientals, and Mexicans of Indian origin, being more distinguishable on account of external differences, can be most easily set apart from the majority. Among these, Negroes are numerically the most important. Foreign-born white persons are less easily identifiable, and the differences by which they are marked tend to disappear with relative rapidity. Groups brought in by every wave of European immigration have experienced minority status for a period, and nearly all have been assimilated into the general population within a generation or two. Immigrants from northern Europe, mainly because of their earlier arrival, are not likely now to constitute minority groups, but those originating in southern and eastern Europe, a more recent immigration, frequently have minority status.

Social status is not fixed for any minority group, and it is not the same for all members of a minority group any more than for all members of the majority. Status tends to vary with the size of a minority group, with the degree of its "visibility," and with the degree of its concentration within a particular geographic area or industry. In communities where there are only a few Negroes, Indians, or orientals, for example, there is often very little tendency to keep them in an inferior social position. On the other hand, in areas where there are large numbers of persons of a particular race or nationality and where they are potentially or actually serious com-

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<sup>3</sup> *Races and Ethnic Groups in American Life*, by T. J. Woolter, Jr., pp. 2-3. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1933.

<sup>4</sup> *American Minority Peoples*, by Donald Young, p. 31. Harper & Bros., New York, 1932.

petitors for employment or in business, they are likely to suffer graver disadvantages. The importance of the competitive factor in contrast to that of national origin is illustrated by the fact that in some communities persons of even the oldest American stock, such as backwoodsmen from Kentucky or "dust bowl" farmers from Oklahoma and Texas, constitute minority groups in the community, suffering discriminations as real as if color, culture, and nationality all conspired to set them apart. Practically every large city in the United States still has minorities made up of persons of European origin, as well as a Negro minority.

Jews also constitute a minority group. Although widely diffused in all social and economic strata and, as a group, not economically disadvantaged, they are, nevertheless, for a variety of reasons, a distinct and disadvantaged minority.

So far as children are concerned some of the barriers, such as language and culture, that separate the several minority groups from the general population are relatively unimportant, except where intensive segregation or extreme clannishness of the group reenforces the differences in language, customs, and social patterns. There are communities and neighborhoods where, because of social rejection or of the tendency to congregate under shelter of their own kind, the minority group is walled off from the larger American community. In such places a spurious and ephemeral security is given the child within his own group, a security that tends to disappear later and to emphasize the handicap of being different. By and large, however, the more lasting handicaps are suffered by those minority children who are conspicuous by color, feature, or other "racial" characteristic, or who fail to enjoy a reasonably equal opportunity with other children in obtaining the benefits of food, shelter, home care, schooling, play, and preparation for a livelihood because of the material privations experienced by their families as members of minority groups.

In these latter categories of lesser opportunity, therefore, the handicaps of children in minorities must be examined and evaluated; in these categories improvement must take place if justice is to be done, since the child's color, race, and ethnic history cannot be changed, nor would any scientist or believer in democracy wish to have them changed.<sup>5</sup>

## The Negro Minority

The chief handicap of the minority child—and this holds with especial force for the Negro child—lies in the fact that he is more likely to belong to the larger family, the family with low income, poor housing, and less desirable occupation, and to live in the less-favored community or neighborhood. The ratio of children to adults is greater among the chief racial

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<sup>5</sup> For a recent discussion of the relative "excellence" of the different races see *Race: Science and Politics*, by Ruth Benedict (Modern Age Books, New York, 1940.)

minority groups than among whites—perhaps because of the more general association between low incomes and larger families. In 1930 the percentage of the population under 20 years of age among whites was 31; among Negroes, 34; among Indians, 42; and among Mexicans, 42.<sup>6</sup> The disparity of income was, however, far greater than this. Data for 1935–36 show that generally over the country white families had at least twice the average income of Negro families, and in Southern communities more nearly three times as much,<sup>7</sup> with differences increasingly marked in the upper-income groups. Whether from the point of view of occupations engaged in or that of relative income in the same type of occupation, the Negro is found consistently under decided disadvantages in comparison with his white fellow citizen.<sup>8</sup>

As might be expected, this disparity in economic well-being of the Negro (and to a similar though varied extent, that of other minority groups) is reflected in the house his family must live in, the neighborhoods to which they are relegated, the sanitation, park provisions, and public amenities they receive. It is, moreover, common knowledge that even within these restricted opportunities the Negro often has to pay more for the same commodity—particularly his dwelling—than the white family with its higher average income.

In access to material benefits through his home, the child of the Negro minority is therefore at a disadvantage. Nor is this disadvantage compensated by a correspondingly greater access to relief or other forms of public assistance. On the contrary, so far as any group receives a lesser share in public assistance, it is again the Negro who suffers discrimination. In many parts of the country standards and grants for Negro families are lower, even in places where the grants to white families are themselves much too low.

The large majority of Negroes in the United States still live in the Southern States, particularly on farms. The movement northward has become heavier in recent years, particularly in the last two decades. It has had behind it the same search for food that brought immigrants here from Europe. There is considerable evidence to indicate that the Negroes were encouraged in this movement partly to meet the shortage in the unskilled-labor supply resulting from the restriction on European immigration.<sup>9</sup>

Twenty percent of the Negro population lived in the North in 1930; 88 percent of the Negroes in the North and 32 percent of the Negroes in the South lived in cities.<sup>10</sup> The northward migration of the Negro has been accompanied by a decline in the birth rate. The low birth rate among

<sup>6</sup> Estimated from reports of the U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1930, Population, Vol. 2, ch. 10.

<sup>7</sup> *Consumer Incomes in the United States*, p. 28. National Resources Committee, Washington, August 1938.

<sup>8</sup> See *The Problems of a Changing Population*, pp. 75–77 (National Resources Committee, Washington, May 1938); *The Structure of the American Economy: Part I, Basic Characteristics*, p. 29 (National Resources Committee, June 1939); and *Races and Ethnic Groups in American Life*, pp. 142–144.

<sup>9</sup> *American Minority Peoples*, pp. 45–49.

<sup>10</sup> *The Problems of a Changing Population*, p. 99.

the Negroes in northern cities and the high death rate among the Negroes in all sections of the country have brought about a net rate of increase for the Negro population that is slightly lower than that for the white. It is predicted that unless there is a marked increase in the fertility of northern Negro women, the continuing northward migration will result in a rate of natural increase for the Negro population well under that required for replacement of those lost by death.<sup>11</sup>

These trends affect the total picture of Negro-white race relations. The Negro population has become diffused over larger areas, its perspective has been broadened, new leaders are developing, and cooperation within the group and with whites on many social problems of common interest is increasing. A growing consciousness of the minority problem as it relates to the Negro group has resulted. It is the dynamic character of the minority group (as of the majority), as Dr. Charles S. Johnson has pointed out, that makes of race relations a "problem." If the Negro minority were content to stay at the bottom of the social and economic scale, there would be a Negro minority but no race-relations problem.<sup>12</sup> However, we cannot, if we would, prevent change and growth in one-tenth of our population, and efforts based on the assumption that we can do so will but aggravate the problem.

Indians and orientals constitute a lesser problem as minority groups than the Negro primarily because they are relatively few in number. The Indian has never competed with the white man for jobs to any significant degree. This group has been thoroughly exploited or restricted in opportunities, and it is only in recent years that Federal policy in respect to Indians has begun to take cognizance of their culture and of what the Indian wants for himself rather than what the white man thinks he wants or ought to have in the way of leadership and equality of opportunity.<sup>13</sup>

### Other Minority Groups

Orientals (in addition to being ineligible for naturalization) are in practice confined to a few occupations where they offer relatively little competition with whites. They are on the whole socially and economically self-contained and rarely become recipients of relief.

The number of Mexicans in this country has increased greatly in recent years, as Mexico is one of the few remaining foreign sources of cheap labor. Although Mexicans are still confined largely to five western and southwestern States and to agricultural migratory labor, they are being drawn increasingly into other sections and other industries. We may therefore expect in the future an aggravation of their situation as a minority group.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129. The net rate of increase is lower for the Negro than for the white in all categories except the rural-farm group, but proportionately more Negroes than whites live in farm areas.

<sup>12</sup> The Present Status of Race Relations With Particular Reference to the Negro, by Charles S. Johnson. *Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (July 1939), p. 323.

<sup>13</sup> Social Needs of Indian Children, by Hazel A. Hendricks. *Social Service Review*, Vol. XI, No. 1 (March 1937), pp. 52-65.

A number of factors tend to eliminate minority status in foreign nationality groups. Among these are rapid assimilation, the restrictions which have been placed in the way of immigration, and a falling birth rate. The rapid intermarriage of persons of different ethnic origins among themselves and with the native American bids fair further to reduce the differences among cultural and ethnic groups.<sup>14</sup> So far as the large family has characterized the immigrant groups and tended to set them apart, the diminishing birth rate will be an equalizing factor. The decline in the fertility rate of foreign-born women has been much more rapid than that of native white women, although the rate for foreign-born women is still about 8 percent higher. This reduced rate of fertility may be attributable to greater urbanization, but, whatever the cause, it is a fact of some significance in the process of assimilation.

Italians, Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks are at present more likely to constitute minority groups than are English, Germans, or Scandinavians. Large-scale immigration from northern Europe took place earlier in the history of this country, and there has been more time for assimilation; this immigration occurred at a time when there was more free land and greater opportunity in crafts and trades, resulting in wider geographic and occupational diffusion. The newer immigration from southern and eastern Europe came largely when industrialization and the urban trend had advanced further, and so immigrants tended to find their major opportunities in unskilled jobs in congested areas. This meant, too, that they had to adjust themselves not only to a new national culture but to an urban existence far different from the rural and village life to which most of them were accustomed. These factors help to explain the difficulties frequently arising between foreign-born parents of rural origin and their children born to urban life in this country.

It is important indeed to recognize the existence and the special problems of these ethnic and cultural groups; and it will still be necessary for some time to give special thought to the situation of the Negroes of the United States as our chief minority group. They combine in the highest degree those aspects of minority status that tend to intensify the problem, as for example, high "visibility," the concern with "race," widespread economic and social discrimination, legal and administrative inequalities, and the effects of many years of imposed status as inferior constituents of the population. But beyond this we must keep repeating to ourselves that it is not this or that group and its vicissitudes that are our chief concern, but rather the problem in democracy which our treatment of them poses for us. Our democratic solution of the minority problem as a whole will not be complete until we have removed every disability that man-made laws and institutions impose upon the Negro in our midst.

<sup>14</sup> *Democracy and Assimilation*, by Julius Drachsler, pt. 4. Macmillan Co., New York, 1920.



## Unequal Facilities Offered to Minority Groups

How well, then, does the community make up in the services which it provides from tax funds (or from voluntary contributions) for the deficit in family income of the Negro or other minority family? Are public-school facilities relatively better, health services and medical care more generous, playgrounds and recreation opportunities more liberal, vocational preparation more abundant, institutional care, social service, guidance to youth, more accessible? To ask these questions is to answer them; ample data are available on the inferior public services to Negroes, the poor schools, wretched health care, high rents, lack of provision for dealing with delinquent children, for serving expectant mothers.

For example, many children in minority groups are segregated in schools. Seventeen States and the District of Columbia have school laws separating Negro children from white, and in many other States Negroes and children of other minority groups are discriminated against in rules and regulations. In spite of progress in recent years, Negro schools are, in equipment and standards, far behind those for white children in the same areas.<sup>15</sup> The situation is similar for some of the other minorities. A recent report by the Advisory Committee on Education states that in poorer districts the public schools in which Indians are enrolled "provide no vocational-education program, no instruction in home economics, and no specialized assistance to children suffering from language handicaps."<sup>16</sup> In some instances Federal and State funds are inequitably distributed. Orientals also are often segregated in schools. Instances can be cited of public as well as private schools in many sections of the country where attendance of children of some races is discouraged in various ways. Moreover, children in minority groups often are made to feel that they are inferior to other children.

An ample literature exists on these conditions. Discrimination abounds, democracy is retarded and in many places defeated. Naturally much of this discrimination is not addressed directly to the child but indirectly, through his parents or group.

Thus in some communities citizens of minority status are deprived of citizenship rights. For example, the poll tax is used to deprive thousands of those who are constitutionally eligible to vote of their right to vote in the eight Southern States having such legislation.<sup>17</sup> This does indeed affect many whites as well as Negroes, but is overwhelmingly effective against the latter.

<sup>15</sup> The Education of the Negro Child, by Charles S. Johnson. *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (April 1936), pp. 264-272.

<sup>16</sup> *Educational Service for Indians*, by Lloyd E. Blauch, p. 52. Advisory Committee on Education, Washington, 1938.

<sup>17</sup> Suffrage in the South, by George C. Stoney. *Survey Graphic*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (January 1940), pp. 5-9, 41-43.

People of minority groups are also often made the butt of attack on racial and religious grounds by various organizations.<sup>18</sup> Many antialien bills would infringe on civil and political rights of citizens and might be used to interfere with legitimate labor and other organizations to which both citizens and aliens belong. Such intimidation has a bearing on the extent to which minority groups can be effective in obtaining better services and conditions for their children.

The principal conclusion that must be drawn from this all-but-universal handicap of children of minority groups is that efforts toward amelioration and toward what has been called the "incorporation" of these children into our democracy must come through attention to the minority problem as a whole, rather than to that of the children only. To the extent that economic and social handicaps may be mitigated or removed from minority groups as such, the opportunities of their children will increase and approximate those of American children of the majority.

### Major Factors in Discrimination

In attempting to deal with these handicaps it is difficult sometimes to disentangle cause and effect, as indeed it is in most of the complicated patterns of social life. In the problem of minority groups two major forces operate in a vicious circle, interlocking, reenforcing, and intensifying each other: One is competition for a livelihood among individuals; the other, competition for superior status among both individuals and groups. If one group can persuade itself or has a long-standing conviction that it is a superior kind compared with another, it will come to despise or hate or even fear the other; on the ground of these feelings, it finds it easy to justify an intensified competition for a livelihood with members of the other group. This, in brief, is the core of the minority problem: Economic competition, spurred by notions of group differences and superiority.

The economic competition is fundamental, universal, and largely inescapable in a competitive economic order. The economic pattern, at any rate, must be dealt with on its own grounds even though it is inextricably interwoven with other phases of the minority problem, for it affects the large majority of the total population as well as the minorities. Can anything be done about the racial and group prejudices that clothe, obscure, and intensify this economic competition and often attain an independent existence practically unrelated to the problem of livelihood? Much may be achieved by direct attention to the nature and grounds of these prejudices about minority groups, but most, perhaps, by understanding the problem, by disseminating truthful information, and by seeking to solve it directly with reference to the framework of democratic intentions.

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<sup>18</sup> See statement by Rev. Dr. Howard D. McGrath, Pastor of the Grace Methodist Church, New York City, as reported in *New York Times*, October 9, 1939.

First, perhaps, comes the necessity of recognizing how superficial and, in many instances, how ephemeral are the traits by which groups are distinguished from one another. The matter of color of skin, hair, or eyes need hardly be labored, nor for that matter, shape of skull, nose, lip, or the cephalic index. No one regards these as inherently important, except as they are thought to be signs of racial or group inferiority or superiority. Wishful thinking has produced some of the most astounding feats of self-delusion on this score. To illustrate the excesses to which this type of thinking may lead, Prof. Ruth Benedict in a recent book<sup>19</sup> quotes the following passage from a book published in 1912, in which the "physical characteristics of the genuine Teuton" are described as follows:

"The great radiant heavenly eyes, the golden hair, the gigantic stature, the symmetrical muscular development, the lengthened skull (which an ever-active brain, tortured by longing had changed from the round lines of animal contentedness and extended toward the front), the lofty countenance, required by an elevated spiritual life as the seat of its expression \* \* \*,"<sup>20</sup>

But the assumptions of racial superiority go deeper than the wishes of racial enthusiasts. True scientists have had difficulty in discarding these assumptions. They influenced such honest scientific endeavors, for example, as the analysis along color lines of mental tests of draftees in the World War, which found that Nordics had more innate intelligence than Alpines and Mediterraneans and that the low scores of Negroes measured directly their congenital inferiority. It is to the credit of science that it cleared itself of its errors when deeper insight was available. It is important to note this reversal by the scientist.<sup>21</sup> For example, C. C. Brigham, who interpreted these tests for immigrants from different parts of Europe says in an article published later: " \* \* \* comparative studies of various national and racial groups may not be made with existing tests \* \* \* in particular, one of the most pretentious of these comparative racial studies—the writer's own—was without foundation."<sup>22</sup>

If in the opinion of the leading American scientists no foundation exists for the assumption of intellectual superiority of one race (as identified by superficial inheritable physical characteristics) over another—and that is their opinion—and if so-called moral characteristics are even more elusive and misleading, what importance should be attributed to those more

<sup>19</sup> *Race: Science and Politics*, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, by Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Vol. 1, p. 535. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1912.

<sup>21</sup> An excellent summary of past and present opinion of leading psychologists is found in *Race: Science and Politics* (pp. 108-121). Prof. Benedict says, "The results of racial tests are believed today to show that hereditary aptitude is not distributed by races and that when environmental conditions for different groups become similar, average achievement also becomes similar" (p. 119).

<sup>22</sup> *Intelligence Tests of Immigrant Groups*, by Carl C. Brigham. *Psychological Review*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 2 (March 1930), p. 165.

passing differences of language, customs, cultural history? These differences are absorbed in the American way of life, contribute to it, help mold it, enrich it, and merge with it without leaving sign or mark in the individual of the second and third American generation—unless and except when deliberate exclusion, discrimination, or segregation helps to keep the groups apart. Such cultural segregation has been strikingly true of some nationality groups, who have established, as a result, “nationality communities” and other forms of organizations as protective countermeasures to the social ostracism by the native American.<sup>23</sup>

### What To Do

What, then, is the central feature of the minority problem as it concerns this Conference on Children in a Democracy? It is the fact that it stands in the way of applying directly to the children of these minority groups those proposals and benefits that might otherwise come to them as part of the childhood of the Nation. Economic improvement of the family may become possible in general, but the handicap of color, race, language, or other distinguishing “minority feature” still tends to exclude the families of minorities and thus harm their children. Community services may be offered through school, clinic, playground, and vocational training, but the allocation of these benefits is unequal and disproportionate, resulting in disadvantages to minority children. If the full acceptance and honest espousal of democracy as the very foundation of the life and government in this country is to be our proud proclamation of faith, the treatment of minorities will cast doubt upon it and uncover flaws in its texture and strength.

The recommendations of this Conference with respect to the minority problem are addressed, therefore, less directly to child welfare and more to general public policy and public opinion. For the same reason these recommendations, perhaps more than those of any other phase of its report, are an integral part of the statement of the case. Their substance is as follows:

The standards set for the protection and care of children in America should apply to all children. The denial of opportunity to any on the grounds of race, citizenship, color, or creed is undemocratic and inimical to the welfare of all children. The Conference calls upon all citizens to work continuously for the elimination of racial discrimination and prejudice in all their forms. This effort must be made in home and school, in law-making bodies, and in local, State, and National organizations, public and private, which serve children directly or indirectly.

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<sup>23</sup> See *New Americans in Allegheny County*, by Mary E. Hurlbutt (Columbia University Press, New York, 1937); and *A Social Study of Pittsburgh*, by Philip Klein and collaborators (Columbia University Press, New York, 1938).

Children are born without prejudice and their attitudes are gained from the environment in which they grow. The family is first to exert its influence on the child, and parents therefore should protect and strengthen the natural tolerance of their children.

Schools at all levels, and also many social and recreational agencies, are in strategic positions to foster racial tolerance and to promote understanding and cooperation between children of different cultural and racial origins. This is not so much a matter of bringing about fuller appreciation of the various cultures represented, although that is important, as it is a question of the attitude of the teacher in the daily life of the school.

Full consideration should be given to minority groups in the planning and administration of social and public services; the same standards of food, clothing, housing, medical care, education, and recreation applied to other children should be used in determining the needs of children in these groups. Involuntary segregation should be eliminated.

Employers and labor unions particularly are in strategic positions to diminish discrimination on the ground of race, creed, color, or citizenship, since among the most severe handicaps of children in minority groups are the inadequate incomes and work opportunities of their parents.

Because minority groups have proportionately more children than others and live to a greater extent in areas with the least resources, the principle of Federal aid to States for services affecting children is extremely important for their welfare.

In the local use of Federal and State grants the same standards of adequacy should be applied to minority groups as to others, and this should be a specific legislative requirement enforced by public opinion and safeguarded by the right of the individual to appeal and to obtain a fair hearing without fear of being penalized.

The expansion of Federal services in the fields of education, health, housing, public works, employment, apprenticeship and vocational training, child welfare, and youth services is an essential means of increasing the opportunities of children in minority groups.

The extension of social-security and fair-labor-standards legislation to agricultural and domestic workers and the enforcement of legislation to protect collective bargaining in agriculture would have a direct and beneficial effect upon minority families and their children, because a large proportion of minority workers are in these occupations.

Aliens should be encouraged to become citizens and to assume the full responsibilities of citizenship to the extent that this is possible. This will benefit their children in both a practical and a psychological sense. The right of Americans to protect themselves against undesirable elements in the population is recognized, but so-called antialien bills which

exploit race prejudice and imply that aliens and all the organizations to which they belong are by nature subversive contradict our tradition of hospitality and are an infringement on civil liberties.

Discriminatory legislation and practices in all their forms should be guarded against and eliminated where they exist. Poll taxes and racial discrimination in civil service are particularly offensive. No person in a democracy should be denied his rights on account of his national origin, creed, color, or citizenship.

## Chapter V

### Common Needs of All Children

**A**LL children need a home, good health, care and protection, favorable conditions for growth. They all need education and training, preparation for the responsibilities of later years. They all need to acquire a personal appreciation of the spiritual and ethical values in their experience, to form standards of right living, and to have access to religious inspiration consistent with a developing philosophy of life.

These needs have a different significance at different periods, in different places, and for different families at the same time and in the same place. What do they mean in the United States in 1940, in the light of our present knowledge, according to the standards of those who have studied the interests of children, in terms applicable to all children—rich or poor, white or black or yellow or red, in cities or on farms, in Maine or Arkansas or Oregon?

### Parents

Home means, first of all, parents—preferably two, and the same two, at least until the child reaches maturity. Children born out of wedlock are at a great disadvantage. They have less prospect of being born alive, and are more likely to die before they are a year old. They can never have a completely normal home life, rarely one that is even stable and secure. Many of them are handicapped by hereditary defects and by the consequences of the ignorance and the economic and emotional difficulties of their mothers before and after they are born. Children born of parents who do not welcome them and who are not prepared to make the adjustments and sacrifices entailed are under disadvantages somewhat similar to those of children born out of wedlock, unless or until the parents' attitude changes.

Other qualities that children would seem to have a right to find in their parents,<sup>1</sup> beyond a happy relationship with each other, a welcoming attitude toward their children, and a serious assumption of responsibility, are freedom from transmissible hereditary defects, and from diseases or other conditions known to threaten the life or health of mother or child; a positively good "constitution"; sufficient intelligence and knowledge to seek

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<sup>1</sup> A psychologist's portrait of "The Good Mother" is drawn by Leo Kanner, M. D., in *New York Times Magazine*, May 12 (Mother's Day), 1940.

advice as needed and to follow it; sufficient income to provide at least the real necessities of life; maturity, but not an age that means exhaustion or too great a gap between the generations.

Assuming that the parents meet these requirements, loss of either one—whether by death or by divorce or desertion—before the child is grown is of necessity a handicap. Death of the mother at the birth of the child is frequently disastrous. The baby's chances of living are seriously decreased, and if he survives, his life is affected in many ways, some obvious, others less clearly established.

After the first year or two the child is less dependent for survival on his mother, but throughout childhood all children need both mother and father: To give them a home, love, and security; care, protection, and guidance; sympathetic and intelligent companionship; and also to help them to develop self-reliance and to learn to accept responsibility. Children therefore need everything that can be done to keep their parents alive and in good health, which means especially measures to reduce deaths and disability in the population between 20 and 50 years of age.

Loss of parents through desertion, separation, or divorce may create difficulties similar to those caused by death. In addition, it usually introduces emotional confusion and conflict of loyalties. If divorce is followed by remarriage and perhaps later divorces and remarriages, the confusion and conflict may be intensified by the abnormal number of adults in a quasi-parental relationship. When voluntary dissolution of the marriage tie is for any reason preferable to continuing it in force, the most that can be done for the children is to safeguard their interests and give them such help as can be given in making an adjustment to the situation. What children chiefly need in connection with desertion and divorce is removal of the conditions that cause them, which for the most part lie in the early education and opportunities of the adults concerned.

### Family Life

Notwithstanding the great changes that have occurred in family life, especially in cities, the family still holds the position of first importance for the growth, development, and education of the child. In the family he gets his physical start; his elementary ideas of personal hygiene and protection from disease; his first notions of social relationships; his early religious training; his primary attitude toward school, church, and civic authority, toward doctor, hospital, clinic, and nurse; his fundamental standards of conduct. Many of the attentions provided by society for children reach them only, or only with full effect, by way of the family.

How large a family should be to give the children optimum values is a question that cannot be answered arithmetically. It would seem to be undesirable that there should be more children than the mother has strength to bear and rear and the father has ability to support.



From the social and educational point of view, there are advantages in a family that includes three, four, or five children, about 2 years apart in age, with a grandmother or a grandfather not far away, if not in the same household, and aunts and uncles and cousins within easy visiting distance. In such a home, with its variety of interests, diversity of outlook and contacts, wealth of affection, necessity for adaptation to others, opportunities for effortless learning through mere observation and association, experience in sharing responsibilities and projects, hopes and anxieties, joys and sorrows, a child has favorable conditions for individual development and preparation for life in a democratic society.

In a small family much of this automatic education is lacking. It has to be supplied by conscious effort, inside or outside the home. Opportunities for giving responsibility and experience in cooperative living to the growing child have to be devised deliberately. Often it is harder to have a democratic relationship with one person than with a dozen. A greater emotional load devolves on each individual when there are fewer to share the common joys and sorrows.

Whatever changes occur in size and composition of the family, however much housekeeping is simplified and special functions of the home are supplemented by other institutions, it is still the family that determines largely what kind of person the child will be. "The first 5 years of life are the most consequential in the formation of the human individual, for the simple and sufficient reason that they come first."<sup>2</sup> Experiences in the first 2 years decide largely whether or not the child will have a cooperative personality. A baby's needs are synonymous with his wants. If parents and nurses collaborate with his biologic needs and his own "tempo and style of growth," his behavior, when it reaches a conscious level, will be efficient and friendly; if not, it will be confused and combative.<sup>3</sup> A little later, relations with the larger world are influenced by the attitude of the family toward acquaintances and associates, toward church, school, and civic authority.

A tolerable social status in the community and the necessary economic resources for material needs are fundamental conditions of the most favorable family life. Certain psychological or spiritual elements also are clearly desirable. Among these are belief on the part of parents that their function is important and that they can make a success of it, together with courage and resourcefulness in adapting old ideals to new conditions; ethical standards, and confidence in the "compulsive force of growth within the child"; recognition of "the dignity of the individual and his right to the fullest development of his own powers within the framework of the acknowledgment of the rights of others," and of the "common bond

<sup>2</sup> *Infants Are Individuals*, by Arnold Gesell, M. D., Ph. D. *Child Study*, Vol. XV, No. 8 (May 1938), p. 244.

<sup>3</sup> From the discussion at the group meeting on *The Family as the Threshold of Democracy*, held in connection with the White House Conference, January 18, 1940.

between the interests of the individual and the interests of the group"; a spirit of loyalty and forbearance, of respect for the rights of others and of tolerance for differences in traits and points of views; "benevolent discipline" in "transmitting raw drives of the individual into socially acceptable patterns"; emphasis on mutual understanding and happiness, the happiness of all members of the family.<sup>4</sup>

To ensure a desirable quality of family life it is essential that there be in the Nation a pervading faith in the stability and importance of the family as the fundamental institution of American democracy, whatever superficial changes that institution may undergo. In this "century of the child" there is need, in the very interest of the child if for no other reason, to emphasize the positive satisfactions to adults in homemaking and child raising. Parents and potential parents must see something in it for themselves.

Parents bewildered by the changes in family life need help in understanding these changes through counsel and guidance. They need help in learning how to share the traditional functions of the family with community agencies. To this end the school, the church, recreation agencies, and health departments can contribute effectively if they continue to develop the family approach and emphasis rather than to think of the child as a detached individual. Families that lack the economic resources or the knowledge to give their children a good home need appropriate assistance. Those that lack the disposition to do so need oversight and persuasion.

The relatively few children in the United States who have no parents or relatives able and willing to provide family life need the best substitute for a natural home that can be supplied.

## Dwellings

Family life and the well-being of every member of the family are conditioned by the character of its dwelling place. The mother, if she is also the homemaker, and the children until they start to school, spend from two-thirds to nearly all of their time at home; school children, from half to more than three-fourths; and the father is usually at home for at least a third of the 24 hours. The health, comfort, and social and civic life of the family "depend very largely on qualities inherent in the structural plant which forms its shelter."<sup>5</sup>

The relative importance of different elements in a dwelling varies for the different members of the family and for each one at different periods of life. For all the family it should provide shelter against storm, heat, and cold, and safety from rats, flies, mosquitoes, vermin, and invisible germs,

<sup>4</sup>Id.

<sup>5</sup>*Introduction to Housing, Facts and Principles*, by Edith Elmer Wood, p. ix. U. S. Housing Authority, Federal Works Agency, Washington, 1939.

from accidents that come from rickety stairs, floors, railings, or faults in structural design, from death or injury by fire, gas poisoning, electric shocks. All require sunlight and air and protection from injurious noise; provisions for heating (in practically all the United States) and for artificial light; a pure water supply and a sanitary system for disposal of sewage and garbage; decent toilet arrangements; facilities for keeping clean and for the performance of household tasks without undue physical or mental fatigue. In the interests of all, the home should be large enough to allow separate rooms for sleeping, living, and cooking; such separate sleeping accommodations as the age and sex of its occupants may require; the possibility of privacy and, on the other hand, enough space for the family to sit down together at meals and for other normal activities in common and with friends from outside.

For babies the kind of dwelling has less significance than the kind of food they get, except as it affects them through other members of the family and provided it has a porch or a fire escape where they can take the air. For little children space for exercise and play in the house and out of doors is important; as they grow older, accessibility to school, church, playground, library, and other places to which they can go alone; in adolescence, a place where they can entertain their friends. For children the single-family house with its own yard is unquestionably the best type. The possibility of finding esthetic satisfaction in the home and its surroundings is a matter of indifference to babies and to little children but increases in importance through adolescence and youth. The moral character of the neighborhood likewise becomes significant for children only after their earliest years are over. Danger from street traffic threatens them when they begin to go out of the house unaccompanied.

Life-long occupancy of the same dwelling, or occupancy of it by successive generations, is not an item in the American standard of living. Attachment to ancestral halls or cottages is not compatible with mobility. American families ordinarily live successively in a number of houses, frequently in a number of localities. The characteristic attitude is to be looking forward to a better home, a readiness to "pick up and move" at any prospect of an improvement in economic conditions. When this is carried to the extreme of substituting life in a trailer or a "jalopy" for a fixed domicile, a loss in family life may of course result, which, together with other disadvantages of a nomadic life, may well outweigh the advantages of mobility, particularly for the children.

For the basic physical character of their homes children are largely at the mercy of society. The vast majority of families, even in rural areas, must choose their dwellings from houses already built. Some were built long ago, and most of them were planned not so much with reference to the welfare of the children who might live in them as with reference to a livelihood, either of occupant or of landlord. For many of the essentials of

good housing the individual family is dependent, especially in cities, on city planning, the transportation system, zoning ordinances, housing codes and inspection departments, the drainage system, the water supply, the street-cleaning service; and in both city and country, under present conditions, on active participation by Federal, State, and municipal governments in demolishing or repairing substandard dwellings and supplying new accommodations.

## Health

To keep children well and to assure them the high degree of health to which the present state of medical knowledge entitles them, a vast and intricate apparatus of social measures directed specifically to that end is needed, in addition to healthy, affectionate, intelligent parents with enough income to provide for their material needs and a happy home in safe and sanitary surroundings. This apparatus includes general sanitary measures for the protection of the health of the population as a whole, healthful conditions in homes, schools, and places of work, control of communicable diseases, and provisions for the care of the sick. It includes also a long series of special measures for professional supervision of the health of mothers and children, for discovery and correction of remediable physical defects, for medical and nursing care in illness, and for education in personal hygiene through many channels.

The months before birth and the first month after birth are a most critical period in the life of an individual. Abortions, miscarriages, and stillbirths, added to deaths in early infancy due to causes antedating birth, make the death rate for this period higher than in any other period of life, except of course among the very old; and on the start babies get in this period depends very largely the subsequent health of the ones who survive. A very moderate amount of care can ensure a good start. The chief elements are medical oversight of the mother before and throughout pregnancy, including such examinations and tests as may be needed, instruction and advice adapted to her understanding, proper food, a reasonable degree of comfort, freedom from anxiety and overwork; at delivery, whether in a hospital or at home, aseptic conditions, skilled attendance by a qualified physician and a nurse, with specialists and necessary facilities within reach in case of emergency or complication; and after the birth of the child, medical and nursing care of mother and baby and supervision of their nutrition.

Throughout the first year of life physical health continues to be the dominating concern. Good nutrition and freedom from infection are the conditions that do most to ensure it. The mother's milk is far and away the best possible food for infants. Constant vigilance is needed to guard the baby from impurities in water and from respiratory and skin infections. Immunization against diphtheria should be started when the baby is 9 months old; vaccination against smallpox before he is 12 months old.

As the child grows older, good nutrition remains of paramount importance. It is dependent not only on a supply of food that is adequate in quantity and quality, but also on the individual child's physical ability to utilize the essential food elements and on his willingness to eat the foods that contain them. As his activity and his exposure to hazards increase, he must be trained to avoid accidents, and external conditions that contribute to the risk of injury must be abated. As his circle of contacts widens, safeguards against infection must be varied and modified. Tests should be made at intervals to determine continued immunity from diphtheria and smallpox, reimmunization given when indicated and at the outbreak of an epidemic, and inoculation against typhoid fever administered. Dangers from communicable disease, particularly tuberculosis, in teachers and other adults intimately associated with children should be reduced to a minimum.

Throughout childhood every child should have periodic health examinations, made by a competent physician. Ideally, reports of these examinations would be combined in a dossier that would constitute a record of the individual's health from birth to death. Each examination during early childhood and the school years would include an appraisal of growth, development, nutrition, and behavior, and would chart defects needing attention. The examination on leaving school and going to work would include X-ray of the chest and would be an occasion for general discussion of the young person's physical condition with reference to his future life.

Prompt and competent medical care in each case of illness (either in a hospital or at home) and for the correction of deficiencies of sight and hearing and other remediable physical defects is obviously needed to ensure health for all children. Periodic dental examinations and treatment, skilled treatment to counteract disabling effects of certain diseases of childhood, convalescent care when needed, counsel and guidance (for parents, teachers, and children) in problems related to mental health as occasion requires, and continuous education in matters of health for everybody are further constituents of a complete health program for the child.

## Protection

All children are dependent on others for mere existence at first. They are dependent on their families for the economic basis of life for many years—formerly 10 or 12 or 14; now more frequently 20 or more. They all need protection throughout childhood against dangers they are not armed to cope with and may not even realize to be dangers. All children, like all adults, need protection from germs and criminals, traffic accidents and falling buildings, and other hazards of modern life that can be dealt with only by social action. Many need protection from evil influences in their surroundings or from abnormal tendencies in themselves.

In the absence of natural guardians, some children need protection against physical suffering, exposure, and hunger. Others, whose natural guardians are unfit or incompetent, need protection from neglect or mistreatment. A large number whose families, with the best intentions, are unable to provide for them need to be protected from suffering by means of assistance to their parents.

Children still need protection through law and administrative machinery and the action of public opinion from exploitation in wage-earning occupations under conditions detrimental to their physical, mental, and social development, or at an age when they should be in school.

Mentally deficient children require special care for their own protection and for that of society. Children who are crippled or otherwise handicapped physically need treatment and education to minimize the effects of their disabilities. Those whose handicaps arise from unhappy or disrupted family relationships or emotional or psychological disturbances need to be discovered, studied, and treated according to their needs and, if possible, in their own homes.

### **Education and Training**

Every child in America (as elsewhere) needs education. No child in America can escape it. It comes to him in great volume through family, school, church, friends, play, books, movies, radio, and all the sights and sounds that reach his senses. He needs education in use and care of the body, in spiritual and cultural values, in cooperative living, as well as in formal academic knowledge. He needs these various forms of education for individual development, satisfaction, and self-reliance, and for successful participation in the democracy.

In the way of formal education the basic need of all children is ability to read, write, speak, and think. To supply this need is primarily the function of the schools, as is recognized both by the public and by the educational authorities. To carry on this function the school must reach every child in the Nation, and it does not do this at present. Moreover, improvement is needed in method of instruction in many phases of education and in many parts of the country. To secure such improvement it will be necessary to have better-paid and better-prepared teachers, modern school buildings and equipment, larger units of school administration, and, above all, action by the Federal Government to reduce the educational inequalities that now exist within and among the States. Although the content of teaching has been somewhat expanded and the span of school years has been extended in both directions, relatively few children have an opportunity to attend nursery school or kindergarten. Nearly a million children of elementary-school age are not in school, and many thousands of competent students of high-school and college age are not enrolled in the appropriate educational institutions because they or their parents lack the financial resources which make attendance possible.

Enrichment of the curriculum in schools of all grades must keep up with the advances in knowledge—judiciously, with discrimination between the knowledge that can be acquired only, or best, under supervision in classroom and laboratory and the knowledge that can easily be “picked up” from newspapers, books, and the radio. Whatever the subject taught, the school program is not concerned merely with imparting information, but with a great many other objectives, among which are the development of the capacity to use the mind and the body and the formation of habits that economize effort and promote desirable social relations.

Although the school is the accepted symbol of education, it is only one instrument. Books, to the child or adult who has learned to “read,” are an inexhaustible resource. Public libraries give access to books selected for persons of all ages and of varied interests. They help to cultivate a love of reading, intelligent reading habits, and a discriminating taste. They enlarge the content of school courses, contribute to vocational advancement, and supply pleasurable and useful occupation for leisure time. Library service adapted to the needs of all children and young people, as well as adults, and available to all is accepted as an integral part of the American standard of living.

Democracy seeks to reconcile individual freedom with social unity. In the development of the children of a democracy a proper balance must be maintained. Historically religion has succeeded in maintaining such a balance by placing its emphasis upon the worth of the individual and at the same time upon human fellowship.

The primary responsibility for the religious development of the child rests upon the parents. In the family he is first introduced to his religious inheritance as he is introduced to his mother tongue. Here the foundations are laid for the moral standards that are designed to guide his conduct through life. A child's religious development is fostered and strengthened by participation in the life of the family in which religion is a vital concern. Responsibility for the religious growth of children and youth is shared by the church and other social organizations that are concerned with their guidance.

Play and recreation are now recognized as an important educational vehicle. All persons need recreation adapted to their physical and psychological requirements at each stage of development. Little children need mainly places where they can play freely and in safety and materials they can use by themselves; but they need also a certain amount of guidance and group activity in games and otherwise. As they grow older, they need increased opportunities for forms of recreation that offer congenial companionship, emotional development, a healthy independence, socializing experiences, contact with nature, sports, pursuit of hobbies, cultivation of artistic tastes. They need also help in evaluating recreation offered under commercial auspices, in using the available cultural opportunities, such as

museums, concerts, and libraries, and in using their leisure wisely. At all ages they need opportunity for creative expression, help in understanding the resources that exist within themselves, as well as those provided externally, and help in developing habits and skills, knowledge and appreciations to enable them to enjoy their everyday experiences both through participation and through observation.

### **Preparation for Later Life**

If the needs of the child are fully met to the age of 16 or thereabouts, he has a solid foundation for the specific preparation that should follow for assuming the responsibilities and enjoying the perquisites of maturity. This involves further education in the broadest sense, general and special, through various mediums: Education for earning a living, for home-making and spending income, for marriage and parenthood, for the performance of civic duties. It involves guidance in choosing an occupation and help in finding employment and getting established as a self-supporting member of society.

A basic need is economic conditions that make possible employment and self-support and an income large enough to justify founding a family. The best preparation for any occupation is of little advantage if there is no opportunity for working at it. The most efficient placement service cannot find openings that do not exist. If there are not enough to go around, it can fill them with the best candidates, and the more expertly this is done, the fewer are the openings available to those seeking employment. Economic readjustment that will increase the possibility of earning a living—a living in accordance with “normal American” standards—is fundamental if the needs of children are to be met.

When the needs of children are fully met, they will arrive at manhood and womanhood equipped to be the kind of parents assumed to be desirable, to give their children the approved kind of family life, to see that they receive the advantages and training that will best prepare them for life. They in turn will give their children a better start in life than they had themselves. And it is part not merely of the American but of the human standard of living that each generation shall stand on the shoulders of the preceding one.



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PART II

THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM

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## Chapter VI

### Livelihood

**T**HE things of ultimate importance to man are in the realm of the spirit: Culture, the love of one's fellow, the way of life. Their attainment rests, however, on the foundation of daily bread. The child begins to explore the world first as a member of the family. The continuing existence of that family rests upon its livelihood. If that is assured, then its members may enjoy the countless blessings of love, companionship, and education that flow from family life. Both the child and his family are in turn members of the community. There is a livelihood for community as well as for family. Public safety, schools, health protection—a hundred advantages of civilization—are provided by the community livelihood just as food, shelter, and clothing for the individual are secured through the family's livelihood. Community in our day in the United States means State and Nation as well as local community or municipality. Material existence, growth, and fulfillment depend for the child, first, on the resources of his family and, second, on the economic vitality of the commonwealth of which he is a member.

### Income of Families

The same economic structure provides the livelihood of the family that also provides resources for community services. The chances of obtaining food, clothing, and shelter through the family depend on the same fundamental resources that enable the community—local or national—to furnish schools, playgrounds, hospitals, churches, health protection, and public safety. Beyond this general fact, however, the detailed problem of livelihood in the family presents practical characteristics different from those of community financing and government solvency.

“To grow up in a family with an adequate standard of living and the security of a stable income” was one of the rights claimed by the White House Conference of 1930 “for every child, regardless of race, or color, or situation, wherever he may live under the protection of the American flag.”

That was not a new idea, but it was an authoritative formulation of principles considered axiomatic in this country: That the welfare of children is bound up with the welfare of their families; and that a stable income sufficient to provide an “adequate” standard of living is indispensable to family welfare.

*Standards of Living.*

Our American idea of an "adequate" standard of living cannot be captured in a definition. It varies according to time and place and many other circumstances. In all its variations, however, there is one characteristic it has, or has had until recent years. It is a rising standard from year to year within a family or from generation to generation.

The income necessary for an adequate standard of living in the United States has meant income sufficiently dependable to permit equanimity and to stimulate planning for the future. It has not meant necessarily secure tenure of a particular position. Change of occupation and change of residence have been characteristic of the American variety of economic security. But we have always assumed that able-bodied adult Americans—men certainly and, increasingly, women as well—could and would support themselves and their families.

A standard of living may be defined as a commonly accepted way of life. As a general concept it embraces the entire range of economic, social, political, and cultural factors that affect the sense of well-being. The "standard of living" of an individual, a family, or a nation is the sum of all the goods and services that the individual, family, or nation considers necessary. It may be higher or lower than the "plane" or "level" of living represented by actual consumption; it is almost always higher than the norms related to minima for well-being. Standards are subjective; levels and norms are objective.

Keeping from actual starvation, being under a roof, and not unclad might be one standard. Obviously this is not a standard relevant to the discussion of child welfare in America. Another standard might be that adopted by the relief authorities in budgeting assistance to families dependent on public assistance. There may be some people who would regard this as a satisfactory standard and would feel no further responsibility, if livelihood on that level were assured for every person in the land through the earnings of the family breadwinners. A "desirable standard" for all American children is not a useful guide either, for few parents would admit that their children should have anything less than the best our civilization can afford, provided it does not result in luxury that undermines character and fitness.

The American standard is based on the assumptions of individual independence and national abundance. An ever-rising standard (except for temporary depressions) is taken for granted in spite of rude shocks in individual and national fortunes. The individual's ideal—the standard that supplies motive power and direction to the employment of his capacities—is to improve conditions for himself and his family from year to year and to see his children start on their independent lives under favorable auspices.

His idea of a "satisfactory" income is usually modest, just a little more than he has now.

Present standards have developed from those of the past, under the modifying influences of increasing wealth, facilities, and knowledge. There was a time when the customary working day for men and women in factories, and often for small children too, was 12 or 14 hours long. Today 8 hours or less is the accepted standard. Present dietary habits, although far from satisfactory, nevertheless represent a revolution, which has been accomplished by scientific research, improved methods of transportation and preservation of foods, introduction of new varieties, and patient education through many channels. Advances in technology and organization of industry for mass production have resulted in material comforts for a larger proportion of families in the United States than in any other country.<sup>1</sup>

Fashions in dress, thanks largely to the mail-order companies and their catalogues, have become fairly uniform throughout the United States. There are no peasant costumes. Styles are the same everywhere. The farmer's daughter and the Main Street clerk have their slacks and bathing suits and "spectator sport" dresses and evening gowns, differing from those of the Park Avenue debutante only in quality and workmanship. The few exceptions to uniformity that still remain, as among the Amish of Pennsylvania, reflect cultural choice rather than social or economic differentiation.

A standard of living cannot truly be translated into a lump sum of money. A given "level" of living may, however, be described point by point, and the cost of its economic components—food, clothing, shelter, and so on—can be ascertained at a given time or place. From such figures we can infer what level of living is possible with a given income in a given set of environmental conditions.

As knowledge has grown about the ingredients required to maintain health and efficiency, a wholesome family life, and normal social relations, and as the sense of social responsibility and the conception of social welfare have developed, progress has been made in determining norms for a level below which American families must not be permitted to live. Food, shelter, and clothing are the elements most amenable to scientific evaluation, and so to the establishment of minimum standards, and they are the elements that can most easily be expressed in money or other concrete terms.

Despite the possibilities offered by these scientific standards, estimates of the total amount of money needed to provide a minimum or a reasonable basic level of living have varied within very wide ranges, even considering diversities due to geographic factors and rural-urban differences. Esti-

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<sup>1</sup> It has been estimated that more than 12 million homes in the United States (about two-fifths of all) have electric refrigerators. Nearly as many have vacuum cleaners, still more (13,400,000) have electric washing machines, and almost three-fourths (22,000,000) have electric irons (*The American Standard of Living*, p. 13. You and Industry Series Bull. No. 4; National Association of Manufacturers, New York, 1940). There are one or more radio sets in 85 percent of all American homes (*Electrical and Radio World Trade News*, Vol. 11, No. 11 [April 15, 1939], p. 7).

mates used by this Conference in connection with its calculations as to the number of children living in families capable of providing for them adequate material care are of necessity subject to the reservations represented by these variations in standards. They should not be permitted, however, to blind the public to the essential significance of the figures. The minimum expenditures required for the level of living used in these estimates are based on detailed and extensive studies by Federal authorities, including the Departments of Agriculture and Labor. They have been designated as constituting a "maintenance level" and were used in the latest available comparative study of costs of living (1935), from which the figures for the present estimates are quoted.<sup>2</sup>

The budget for this "maintenance level" in urban communities would allow, as of 1935, for a family of four persons, two adults and two children of 13 and 8, respectively, a four- or five-room house or apartment in a fair state of repair, with indoor bath and toilet for the exclusive use of the family. No automobile, no savings, except life-insurance premiums of \$46 a year, and an amount less than the estimated average annual cost of medical care are included in the budget. An inexpensive radio, a daily newspaper, movies once a week are within the budget, as well as modest allowances for the staple articles of food, clothing, household furnishings, necessary transportation, personal incidentals, and church contributions. The average cost of this level of maintenance in the 59 American cities studied in 1935 was \$1,261, divided roughly as follows:<sup>3</sup>

Food.....	\$448
Clothing, clothing upkeep, and personal care.....	184
Housing.....	222
Household operation.....	154
Miscellaneous.....	253
	<hr/>
	\$1,261

These figures and the succeeding calculations are intended, of course, to be a suggestive approximation to the truth and not to be taken literally "to the penny." For one thing they are averages and therefore, in a sense, unreal, as all averages must be. In the second place, by the time this Conference was held costs of living, as well as national income, had changed, and necessarily by the time this publication is issued they will have changed again, so that appropriate adjustments to the figures will have to be made by the reader who is interested in having statistics up to date. It happens that the most complete and varied figures for family incomes and ex-

<sup>2</sup> *Intercity Differences in Costs of Living in March 1935, 59 Cities*, by Margaret Loomis Stecker, pp. ix-xxvi, 158-161. Works Progress Administration Research Monograph X11. Washington, 1937.

<sup>3</sup> On the so-called "emergency level" this same family would have spent \$903, divided among the corresponding items at \$340, \$128, \$168, \$122, and \$145 respectively. On either level the amounts would vary, of course, according to the size of the family, to some extent according to its composition, and according to geographic location. Neither of these "levels" should be confused with the "subsistence level" of keeping body and soul together, a level incompatible with any conception of a "standard."

penditures are available for a 12-month period, July 1935–June 1936 only, and it is preferable, therefore, to use this period. It was well out of the trough of the depression, although not so good as 1929 or 1940. The national income for the 2 years 1935 and 1936, for example, averaged \$60 billion, as compared with \$83 billion for 1929, \$76 billion for 1940, and the record low of \$40 billion for 1932.<sup>4</sup>

The 1935–36 income represents, therefore, a 50-percent improvement over 1932, but it is less than the high-water mark of 1929 by 28 percent. The period is considerably nearer to “good times” than to the worst of the depression. Compared with 1940, however—the year of the White House Conference—it was not a favorable time. The year 1940 had a national income of \$76 billion, a rise over 1935–36 of 27 percent. From the standpoint of total national income, therefore, data for 1935–36 might be adjusted by this ratio, except for the fact that the increased income is known to have gone in a disproportionate degree to upper-income groups, as compared with lower-income groups.<sup>5</sup>

Changes have also taken place in the cost of living, so that the \$1,261 “maintenance level” budget of 1935 is similarly subject to adjustment. From March 1935 to March 1937 the cost rose by 4 percent in 32 of the 59 cities for which check-up was made. A survey in March 1941, covering 33 cities, shows further changes which justify an average cost increase of 6 percent. At this rate, roughly speaking, the maintenance-level cost of living in 1941 might be approximately \$1,367 instead of \$1,261.<sup>6</sup>

There is reason to believe, therefore, that the amount required for this level of expenditure is well within the economic capacity of the United States, at least by arithmetic. The national income for 1940 exceeded \$76 billion, which if evenly divided among the population would give an income of \$536 per capita, or \$2,304 for a family of four—an income 69

<sup>4</sup> *Survey of Current Business*, Vol. 21, No. 6 (June 1941), p. 17. U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington.

<sup>5</sup> There are numerous ways of estimating this disproportion. One simple fact, however, may be illustrative. The average for 1935–36 of compensation paid to employees was \$39.9 billion; in 1940 it amounted to \$51.8 billion, an increase of 30 percent. Net income of incorporated business for the two periods rose from \$2.75 billion to \$4.8 billion, an increase of 78 percent. On the other hand, corporate business during the depression had shown only slight profits—for several years, 1931–33, inclusive, it had suffered actual losses—so that this high rate of increase in corporate profits might seem reasonable. Yet during these same years, dividends, typically a source of income for higher-income groups, continued to be paid by the corporations as a whole. During the 3 years, 1931–33, for which a total net corporation loss of \$5.9 billion is recorded, dividends paid out by these companies amounted to \$9.2 billion.

<sup>6</sup> The change from 1935 to 1937 for 32 of the 59 cities covered in *Intercity Differences in Costs of Living* is recorded in the published report of that study (p. 10). The later data are contained in the *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 52, No. 5 (May 1941), p. 1230. No average change was calculated in this later study to compare with the earlier one. However, for purposes of illustration, when the two cities that show highest and lowest costs in 1935 and the two cities that show the highest and lowest changes from 1935 to 1937 are compared, the following figures emerge:

	March 1935	March 1941	Increase Percent
City with highest cost, 1935, Washington, D. C. ....	\$1, 414	\$1, 498	5. 9
City with lowest cost, 1935, Mobile, Ala. ....	1, 130	1, 196	5. 8
City with highest increase, 1935–37, Detroit. ....	1, 318	1, 435	8. 9
City with lowest increase, 1935–37, Boston. ....	1, 353	1, 374	1. 6

percent above that of the maintenance-level budget when calculated at the advanced figure of \$1,367.

When we examine the extent to which the income necessary for this level of living is actually attained, some rude shocks await us. Roughly speaking, two-thirds of all families<sup>7</sup> in the Nation—averaging more than three persons per family—had an income in 1935–36 of less than \$1,450 a year. These two-thirds are mostly families of wage earners and farmers; there is a smaller sprinkling of clerical employees and business men. They include the bulk of the larger families. Some of these facts represent, as will be seen, conditions that had existed prior to the depression; others are associated with the depression. At any rate, they present an important factual aspect of the American scene that is bound to affect programs of education, employment, recreation, public assistance, and national economy.

### *Income of Families with Children.*

From the standpoint of child welfare, the significance of inequality in the distribution of wealth must be measured in relation to other factors. At one end of the scale, one-half of 1 percent of all families have one-tenth of the total national income; at the other end, one-tenth of the national income is shared by 32.3 percent of the people. Or, to put it another way, 81 percent of the population share one-half of the national income, while 19 percent share the other half. This, in a sense, describes an economy which presupposes unequal opportunities for various groups of the population.

More important is the fact that income per individual is progressively less as the size of the family—and hence the number of children affected—increases. The average per capita income per annum in American cities goes down precipitately from \$1,280 for single-person families to \$774 in families of two persons and to \$221 in families of seven or more. These figures are for families that had not received any kind of public relief during the year. Families that *had* received relief had an average per capita income from all sources of \$165 for the year and averaged 4.5 persons per family (chart 15).

It is true that larger family groups do not need as much income per person as smaller families to maintain the same level of living. Two cannot “live cheaper than one,” but two can live on less than twice as much as one. Many familiar economies in management and purchasing become effective with additions to the membership of the household, and the per-person cost of common facilities and services in a home diminishes as the number of persons sharing them increases. But the divergencies in in-

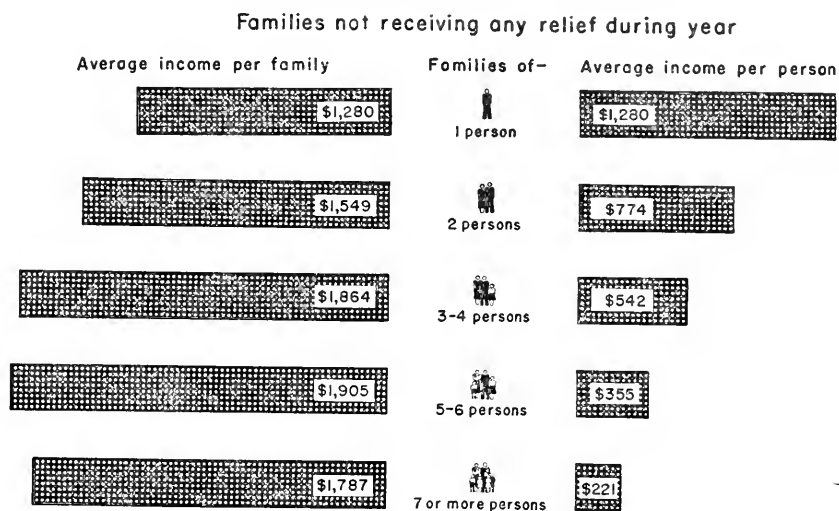
<sup>7</sup> *Consumer Incomes in the United States; their distribution in 1935–36*, pp. 1–12. National Resources Committee, Washington, August 1938. “Family” means family group, or “consumer unit,” of whatever size, including individuals living alone. These single-individual families constituted some 34 percent of the “families,” and 8 percent of all persons in the United States.



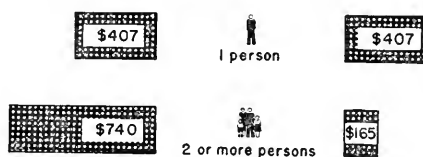
come per person among these families of different sizes are greater than can be explained by such factors. Obviously, according to these figures, the average level of living, to the extent that it is determined by income, is lower with each increment in size of family.

It is of particular interest to this Conference to know what proportion of the children of the Nation are in families with these low incomes or rather

**Chart 15.—Average income per family and per person among urban families of specified size; United States, 1935–36<sup>1</sup>**



**Families receiving some relief during year**



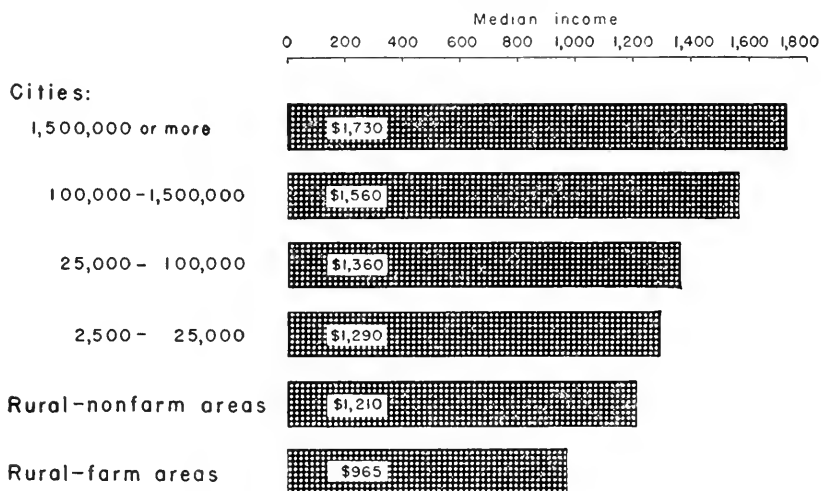
<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (National Resources Committee).

in families in which a reasonable income of at least the “maintenance level” is not found. No figures are available from which a direct answer to this question may be given, but it was possible to derive from a combination of studies a fairly close approximation to the facts. Calculations based on data regarding distribution of incomes and on composition of families as of 1935–36 lead to the conclusion that *one-half to two-thirds of the children in the cities of the United States are in families whose income is insufficient to provide the goods and services comprised in the “maintenance level” type of family*

*budget*.<sup>8</sup> Facts cited elsewhere indicate that the condition of rural children is as bad, if not worse.

This is the central and most important fact regarding the economic condition of at least half and perhaps two-thirds of the child population of this country, whose economic security and adequacy, as most of them are above the distress level, cannot be achieved by relief or public-assistance measures alone, nor even by the addition of social insurance. Their welfare requires the assurance of fundamental, normal economic security for the

**Chart 16.—Median income of nonrelief families of two or more persons in cities of specified population and in rural-farm and rural nonfarm areas; United States, 1935–36<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (National Resources Committee).

average American family, that is, for worker and farmer throughout the country, and a vast increase in public services, such as education, health protection, and recreation. Especially is this true for the families in the lower-income groups, as children are concentrated to a disproportionate degree in low-income families.

Low-income families in turn are disproportionately numerous—

Among rural rather than urban families.

In agricultural as against industrial occupations.

Among Negro families as compared with white families.

In the Southeast in contrast with the rest of the country.

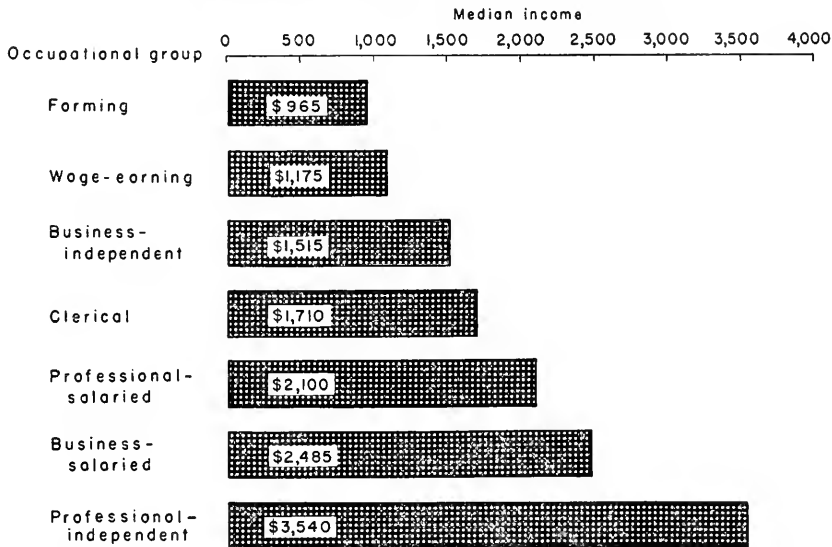
<sup>8</sup> The number of children in families at different income levels was computed by the Conference staff from data of the *National Health Survey, 1935*, in 83 cities in 19 States (U. S. Public Health Service). In another study (*Intercity Differences in Costs of Living, March 1935, 59 Cities*, by Margaret Loomis Stecker; Works Progress Administration Research Monograph N11, 1937), \$1,261 was found to be the average cost for a family of four of a level of living defined for the purpose of that study as a "maintenance level of living." The method used for arriving at the estimate of the number of children in families below "maintenance level" is shown in appendix 1.

Among migrants as against those relatively settled.

Among the unemployed and those on relief.

These categories usually overlap and sometimes are merely other ways of looking at the same thing. Thus the relatively low income of the rural family is usually due to the fact that the family income is derived from agriculture, which compares unfavorably with most wage-earning and salaried occupations. The low income of the Negro is inseparable in most instances—although not universally—from the fact that he is predominantly a rural dweller engaged in agricultural occupations. The economic handicaps of families in the Southeast are compounded of rural-agricultural status

**Chart 17.—Median income of nonrelief families of two or more persons, by occupational groups; United States, 1935–36<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (National Resources Committee).

and of a high percentage of Negroes in the population. Migrants alone seem to have the combination of no land, no job, no home, but many children.

### *Rural Family Incomes.*

Among city-dwelling families who had received no relief and were therefore theoretically self-supporting in 1935–36 in cities of 25,000 or more population, from 10.6 percent to 18.9 percent had an income of less than \$780 a year. The percentage of these low-income families increased as the size of the city decreased. This is a high proportion, but it seems almost low in contrast with the small city of 2,500 to 25,000 population—in which 21.3 percent of its families had less than \$780 annual income—and with the rural community of still smaller size—in which 25.4 percent of its families were in this low annual-income group. To all these should be

added the group who had received some relief, comprising 15.3 percent of all families. Compared with these urban percentages the families on farms are still the worst off, with 37.6 percent of their numbers earning less than \$780 a year. In these calculations the value of the farm produce raised by the farmer and consumed by his family was counted as income, so that the comparisons are valid. Conversely, as might be expected, the families able to attain the "upper third" income group, \$1,450 or more per annum, are only 27.1 percent among farming families, as compared with 62.2 percent among families in the metropolis.<sup>9</sup>

Types of farming and the chances of accumulating resources from agricultural pursuits are subject to regional differences, and they account in large part for the concentration of low-income families in certain States, notably the Southeast. The differences are further accentuated by the concentration of Negro families in the same States. Table 1 presents a few of the highlights of this distribution. Among the striking facts shown in that table a few deserve special emphasis. In the Pacific Region, for example, 46 percent of farming families had annual incomes of less than \$1,250 (approximately the amount calculated for the maintenance-level budget of the four-member family), as compared with the corresponding national average for farm families of 65 percent, while in the Southern Region more than three-fourths of the families had less than this annual income. Sharecroppers present the depressing ratio of 96 percent of families with less than that rate of income; in fact, no sharecropper family is recorded as having an income of as much as \$2,000 a year. On the other hand, Pacific-Region farmers not only have fewer low-income families but make a notable showing in the highest-income group; the percentage having incomes of \$5,000 or more or even \$10,000 per annum is almost twice that of the general population. This is the area where superfarms are an industry, and the farm laborer, resident and migrant, is the unskilled worker standing in line at the farm-factory gate.

The per capita income by States shown in chart 7 (p. 17) is another reflection of the same general fact—higher income in urban-industrial than in rural-agricultural areas, higher in the Northern and Pacific States than in Southern and South Atlantic States.

There are certain indirect liabilities, economic and social, that tend to aggravate these basic rural disabilities. Thus rural areas have had to provide for an excess of young people who in earlier periods migrated to cities but in depression years have been unable to do so in the former volume.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Consumer Incomes in the United States*, p. 96. "Families" in these percentages excludes individuals living alone.

<sup>10</sup> In the first years of the depression the normal movement from farms to cities decreased, and the movement was reversed in 1932; since 1933, however, there has again been a movement from farms to cities, but in only half the volume of the twenties. This decreased migration meant an increase in farm population of nearly 2 million since 1930. A large part of the increase consisted of young people just entering the labor market. For a fuller discussion of changes in rural population, regionally as well as nationally, see *Research Memorandum on Rural Life in the Depression*, by Dwight Sanderson (Social Science Research Council, Bull. 34, ch. II, pp. 11-28; New York, 1937).

This has had the effect of depressing rural levels of living still further.

Farmers' families, furthermore, do not have many of the established benefits and protections that have been developed for city wage workers. Children on farms in most instances are not covered by child-labor laws. Unemployment-insurance and old-age benefits under the Social Security Act do not apply to farmers or their employees. Minimum-wage provisions do not include agricultural wage labor except for special types of large-scale farming.

**Table 1.—Percentage distribution of all nonrelief families, of all nonrelief farm families, and of nonrelief farm families in five geographic regions, by income level, 1935-36<sup>1</sup>**

Income level	All fam- ilies	Farm fam- ilies	Farm families in—						
			New Eng- land Region	North Central Region	Southern Region			Moun- tain and Plains Region	Pacific Region
					Total	Oper- ators	Share- croppers		
Total . . . . .	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$1,250 . . . . .	48.5	65.1	54.9	50.9	76.0	69.6	96.0	71.6	45.8
Under \$250 . . . . .	2.8	3.8	1.2	2.2	3.4	1.8	8.5	13.1	3.3
\$250-\$500 . . . . .	7.8	13.9	5.2	5.5	20.7	15.4	37.9	13.9	6.0
\$500-\$750 . . . . .	11.3	18.0	12.6	11.3	23.8	21.6	30.4	15.9	10.8
\$750-\$1,000 . . . . .	13.4	16.6	17.4	16.1	17.4	18.4	13.9	16.2	13.7
\$1,000-\$1,250 . . . . .	13.2	12.8	18.5	15.8	10.7	12.4	5.3	12.5	12.0
\$1,250-\$1,500 . . . . .	10.8	9.8	10.6	13.5	7.3	8.9	2.5	8.2	10.6
\$1,500-\$1,750 . . . . .	9.1	7.0	11.6	10.4	4.7	5.8	1.0	5.4	8.6
\$1,750-\$2,000 . . . . .	7.3	4.8	7.0	7.4	2.9	3.7	.5	3.8	7.4
\$2,000-\$2,250 . . . . .	5.5	3.1	5.0	4.3	1.9	2.5	.....	3.0	5.6
\$2,250-\$2,500 . . . . .	4.0	2.5	4.4	3.9	1.4	1.8	.....	1.9	3.9
\$2,500-\$3,000 . . . . .	5.2	2.9	3.5	4.2	1.9	2.5	.....	2.0	4.8
\$3,000-\$3,500 . . . . .	3.0	1.6	1.0	2.2	1.1	1.5	.....	1.8	3.1
\$3,500-\$4,000 . . . . .	1.8	1.0	.4	1.4	.7	.9	.....	.7	2.2
\$4,000-\$4,500 . . . . .	1.0	.5	.4	.5	.5	.6	.....	.3	1.3
\$4,500-\$5,000 . . . . .	.6	.3	.1	.2	.3	.4	.....	.2	.9
\$5,000 and over . . . . .	3.2	1.4	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.8	.....	1.1	5.8
\$5,000-\$7,500 . . . . .	1.3	.6	.3	.6	.6	.8	.....	.8	1.7
\$7,500-\$10,000 . . . . .	.8	.4	.8	.4	.2	.3	.....	.3	2.3
\$10,000 and over . . . . .	1.1	.4	.....	.1	.5	.7	.....	.....	1.8

<sup>1</sup> Derived from tables 5, 8, and 18B, *Consumer Incomes in the United States*.

Low-income families are further disadvantaged by the fact that their taxes are, generally speaking, not distributed according to ability to pay.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Facing the Tax Problem; a survey of taxation in the United States and a program for the future*, p. 237. Twentieth Century Fund, Inc., New York, 1937.

It is estimated that 95 percent of the population of the country is probably subject to regressive taxation, that is, the lower the income, the higher the percentage paid out in taxes.<sup>12</sup> Thus, New York State farm owners with \$500 incomes pay a total tax bill of 19 percent of their income, whereas those with \$2,000 incomes pay only 13 percent. City home owners in New York State at the \$1,000 income level pay a total tax bill of 18 percent of their incomes, compared with 16 percent for those at the \$2,000 level.

It is difficult on the basis of data now available to make a precise statement of "levels of living" of farm families and of how many children are affected by poverty in farm homes. We do not yet have adequate information on the proportion of home-consumed produce, the adequacy of diet, the quality of housing, and the expenditures for clothing, recreation, and other items in farm families. It is difficult to make generalizations about farm families, because of the highly individual character of farming, the relatively high degree of self-sufficiency as compared with urban families, and the variation in types of farming, of tenure, and of size of holding.

The form of income received by farm families differs from that of city people. Income in kind plays a large part. This has advantages in some places where house occupancy and food raised for home consumption can safeguard a minimum level of subsistence. This advantage diminishes, however, where under long tradition or pressing economic forces the raising of cash crops is emphasized to the loss of home food production. Also the income of farmers is less flexible, because a smaller proportion of it is in cash. Farmers are less prepared therefore to meet emergencies. Where the tenant system has developed and tenants and sharecroppers often do not determine the kind of crop which is planted, there is apt to be neither the benefit of a good, flexible cash income nor the relative security of home production of food. Tenancy, moreover, has brought additional costs to families because of frequent moving.<sup>13</sup>

The proportion of the food supply for a farm family that is produced at home varies from place to place. It has been found to be as high as 83 percent in one group of southeastern counties and as low as 21 percent in a fruit-growing area in California. Farm-family expenditures for food are, at any rate, larger than for any other item in the budget.<sup>14</sup> The families of farm operators have better diets than village families and often better than urban families.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, contrary to some popular notions, housing conditions on the farm are far from uniformly good.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *You Are a Taxpayer*, by Mabel Newcomer, pp. 29-30. Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York, 1939.

<sup>13</sup> It has been estimated that the cost of moving averages about \$57 per family, with a total moving bill for Southern tenants of \$25,000,000 a year (*Report on Economic Conditions of the South*, p. 47; Prepared for the President by the National Emergency Council, Washington, 1938).

<sup>14</sup> *The Outlook for Farm Family Living in 1940* (mimeographed release, November 11, 1939). U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington.

<sup>15</sup> *Present Day Diets in the United States*, by Hazel K. Stiebeling and Callie Mae Coons. Yearbook of Agriculture, 1939, p. 311. U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, 1939.

<sup>16</sup> *The Farm-Housing Survey*. U. S. Department of Agriculture Miscellaneous Publication No. 323, Washington, March 1939. See also Ch. XIII, Dwellings, of this report.

Not all farm income is spent or is available for general living. Even at low-income levels many families spend some of their funds for amortizing loans. Both tenant and landlord often pay high interest rates, for usually the only security they can offer for loans is a precarious crop. In the South landlords are reported to be paying as high as 16 per cent and tenants up to 40 percent interest.<sup>17</sup>

When costs of living rise, farm families as a group may feel the pinch less than city families. Costs of raising food at home increase less than retail food prices. For this reason most farm families can offset somewhat a rise in the general retail-price level by planning to raise a larger share of their food supply than is usual. It is estimated that about one-third of the rural families combine to some extent industrial activity with farming.<sup>18</sup> Such employment has the indirect advantage that the farmer may receive some of the benefits of the system of social insurance that are not open to agricultural employment.

The material welfare of the Negro family in farming, as well as in other pursuits, is subject to several factors of a handicapping nature. The basic discrimination under which he suffers is a pervasive fact that affects every phase of his economic security. Beyond that are the facts that he is, to an overwhelming degree, a farmer and a dweller in economically retarded States; and that he has a large family and inadequate educational facilities to enable him to take advantage of whatever opportunities for advancement there may be. Within the agricultural setting the lower economic status of the Negro family, as compared with the white family, is striking. Statistics, forbidding as they may be to many readers, represent the simplest way of telling this story. Here are a few eloquent comparisons:

Table 2.—Median incomes of white and Negro nonrelief farm families in four Southern States, 1935-36<sup>1</sup>

	White	Negro		White	Negro
North Carolina:			Georgia:		
Farm operators . . . . .	\$1, 591	\$1, 053	Farm operators . . . . .	\$794	\$533
Sharecroppers . . . . .	1, 036	803	Sharecroppers . . . . .	583	422
South Carolina:			Mississippi:		
Farm operators . . . . .	1, 153	607	Farm operators . . . . .	1, 202	578
Sharecroppers . . . . .	640	438	Sharecroppers . . . . .	608	422

<sup>1</sup> Selected from a larger list in *Family Income and Expenditures, Pacific Region and Plains and Mountain Region, Pt. I, Family Income*, p. 129 (U. S. Department of Agriculture Miscellaneous Publication No. 356, Washington, 1939).

<sup>17</sup> *Seven Lean Years*, by Thomas J. Woofter and Ellen Wilson, p. 79. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1939.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

The foregoing figures relate to rural Negroes, in fact to farming families only. It might be thought that no such differences exist in cities. It is important, however, if a fair picture of the economic conditions of families is to be presented, to recognize that the color factor extends beyond that of agricultural occupation in defining the economic place of the Negro family. In city and country, in the South and in the North, the Negro family is consistently on a lower economic level than the white. On this point also the consumer-income study of the National Resources Committee supplies evidence. Table 3 and chart 18 give some of the facts:

**Table 3.—Percentage distribution of white and Negro nonrelief families in large cities and in rural-nonfarm areas in specified regions, by income level, 1935-36<sup>1</sup>**

Income level	Cities of 100,000 to 1,500,000 population in the North Central Region		Cities of 100,000 population or more in the South		Rural nonfarm in the South	
	White	Negro	White	Negro	White	Negro
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$250.....	1.5	1.6	1.6	9.6	.8	21.6
\$250-\$500.....	2.6	5.1	3.5	24.3	5.0	48.4
\$500-\$750.....	5.4	16.1	7.7	25.0	11.6	19.3
\$750-\$1,000.....	9.1	26.6	8.8	18.8	12.9	5.6
\$1,000-\$1,250.....	12.2	21.6	9.6	9.4	12.4	2.7
\$1,250-\$1,500.....	11.6	11.5	8.7	5.0	11.5	.9
\$1,500-\$1,750.....	10.9	6.1	9.4	3.5	10.1	.3
\$1,750-\$2,000.....	9.9	5.0	9.1	1.2	6.9	.3
\$2,000-\$2,250.....	7.4	2.4	7.6	1.1	6.2	.1
\$2,250-\$2,500.....	5.7	1.9	7.5	.7	4.4	.3
\$2,500-\$3,000.....	8.0	1.0	8.6	.7	5.9	.3
\$3,000-\$3,500.....	4.8	.4	5.7	.3	3.6	.1
\$3,500-\$4,000.....	2.8	.3	4.5	.1	2.3	.1
\$4,000-\$4,500.....	1.6	.1	2.4	.2	1.3	( <sup>2</sup> )
\$4,500-\$5,000.....	.9	( <sup>2</sup> )	1.7	( <sup>2</sup> )	1.1	( <sup>2</sup> )
\$5,000-\$7,500.....	2.0	.1	2.6	.1	2.5	( <sup>2</sup> )
\$7,500-\$10,000.....	1.4	.2	.5	( <sup>2</sup> )	.9	( <sup>2</sup> )
\$10,000 and over.....	2.2	( <sup>2</sup> )	.5	( <sup>2</sup> )	.6	( <sup>2</sup> )

<sup>1</sup> Derived from tables 20B, 21B, 22B, *Consumer Incomes in the United States*.

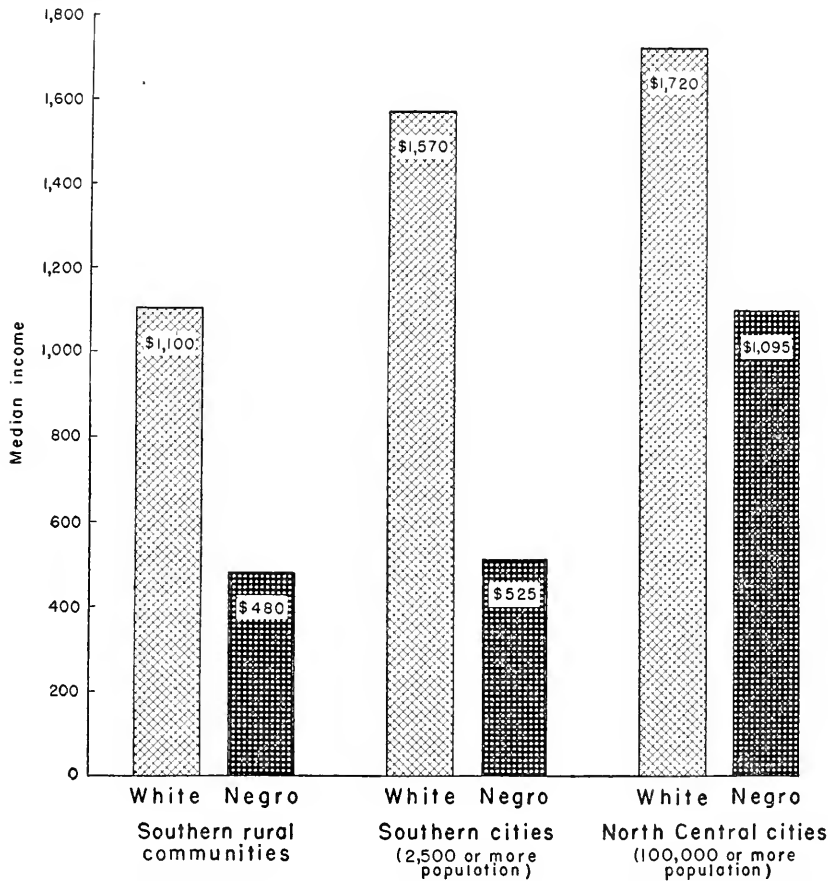
<sup>2</sup> Less than 0.05 percent.

Elsewhere in this report some data have been presented to illustrate the economic situation of migrants, of the unemployed, and, in general, of those requiring public assistance. In general it is true that so far as the 1935-36 figures tell the story the proportion of American families without adequate income is surprisingly large, that children are more numerous both relatively and in absolute numbers among low-income than among high-income



families, and that these facts create hardships for children particularly in certain parts of the country, in certain occupations, among Negroes, and in large families.

**Chart 18.—Median income of nonrelief families of two or more persons in Southern rural communities and cities and North Central cities, by race; United States, 1935–36<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (National Resources Committee).

It has become abundantly clear also that local community livelihood—that is, the availability of taxable resources or of voluntary funds to supply schooling, health, recreation, and other needs of the child and to render the economic assistance required by families in distress—is neither sufficient to meet the requirements nor distributed over the country in proportion to the existence of need.<sup>19</sup> How can the basic income be raised

<sup>19</sup> See *Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth*, by Newton Edwards (American Council on Education, Washington, 1939), and references cited in this source. See also tax studies published by the Twentieth Century Fund, Inc., New York.

so that wage earner, farmer, and salaried worker may earn enough to provide at least a "maintenance level" of living for his family? How may that greatest and most destructive enemy of the breadwinner—unemployment—be conquered or avoided? Attempts have been made in recent years—and considerable progress has been attained—through the systems of social insurance, to provide in part a substitute income to families in which interruption of income rather than low rate of income is responsible for its inadequacy. Measures toward meeting the fundamental inadequacies due to low wages, insufficient farm income, and excessive unemployment have also been inaugurated, but not to an extent commensurate with the requirements and without sufficient public recognition of the fact that fundamental characteristics of the national economy demand more extensive and permanent measures in the future. These characteristics are receiving increasing attention, which is being gradually translated into practical proposals by economists and statesmen.

### The Problems of Economic Reconstruction

How can the basic income of families be so increased and stabilized that no children may need to live, as half to two-thirds of them lived in 1935–36, on family budgets below a reasonable maintenance level? The answer to this question is important for statecraft as well as for economics, for the advancement of democracy as well as for balancing the budget, and for the children of America as well as for the national income.

If the fundamental problems of national economy upon which depend the livelihood of families and the welfare of children were entirely technical in nature and if technicians agreed on what ought to be done, then this Conference concerned with the interests of the child would have little to offer toward economic reconstruction. But since attitudes and philosophies are among the important factors in arriving at long-range measures, and since in a democracy the citizen's philosophy on public issues has importance, as well as that of the specialist, it is well that this Conference review some of the salient features of the economic situation and formulate its own conclusions as a Conference of informed and interested citizens.<sup>20</sup>

The fact that too many families in the United States have inadequate incomes is no longer disputed by any economist. On measures that would increase income and stabilize it, however, there is deep-seated disagreement. Underlying the divergent points of view on the technical aspects of the question there are certain feelings and fears, certain loyalties and hopes that make a complete meeting of minds difficult. Even a statement of the diverse attitudes and philosophies bearing on the question is hazard-

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<sup>20</sup> An important discussion of technical and theoretical issues is contained in a recent publication of the National Resources Planning Board, June 1940, being Part 2 of *The Structure of the American Economy; Toward Full Use of Resources*.

ous, since they overlap and interfere with one another. An approximate and rough contrast, at best, may be attempted. To some economists the key and test of prosperity is in the creation and in the fluidity of capital, the opportunity for investment, increase in production; from these, they believe, would flow in sequence increased employment, more consumption, greater purchasing power, larger national income. To others the sequence of prosperity, in point of emphasis, begins with higher pay rolls, shorter hours, more employment. Beginning with these they expect to attain increased purchasing power and greater consumption, hence more production, and ultimately the creation of capital, investment, profits, and so on over the cycle again. The difference between the two schools of thought is in part technical, in part philosophical. At any rate it is a question of emphasis, for while the cycle of sequences is admittedly the same, it makes considerable difference whether the perspective is viewed in relation primarily to capital and profits or primarily to employment and purchasing power. On the technical side, therefore, the question is whether efforts are exerted first at the points of investment and new enterprise, or whether the priming is to be done first through wages, purchasing power, and consumption, with the expectation that production profits, capital, and expansion would follow.

On the philosophical side the differences are more difficult to state, for the very statement may appear to invite controversy. Yet it is important to be aware of these divergent philosophies or sympathies, for they are exceedingly potent in determining technical choices. There is, for example, the point of view that arises from a preoccupation with the extent of unemployment as affecting the lives of the unemployed, with low levels of living, the dangers of national malnutrition—in general, the meaning and incidence of poverty. Those who hold this point of view seem less insistent on the concepts of free enterprise, initiative, competition, saving by thrift, the annual budget balancing, the national debt. They tend to emphasize the economic dangers in the concentration of wealth, in the social loss of competitive investment and production, and in the abuses that may arise from powers of monopoly. The types of measures usually favored by economists of this school include generous relief and social-security measures, agricultural planning, large-scale public employment as needed to take up the slack in private employment, regulation of investment and banking, and devices for managed export and import.

Those following this interpretation of economic factors are inclined to interpret the economic events of the past three decades as constituting a substantial divergence from the preceding period and as forecasting a substantially different economic structure in the future from that which has characterized American economy in the past. They regard the depression which set in after 1929 not as merely another, though more severe, trough

in the business cycle, but as a symptom of more fundamental alterations in the national and international economy and in the interaction of consumption, productivity, and changes in population and markets. Conversely, they regard the various partial recoveries during the depression as temporary easements and readjustments from the extreme ebb, but not as even a partial "return of prosperity."

The other school of thought or philosophy has been particularly perturbed by our lowered rate of production as the central feature of economic disorganization. Even where production has caught up with the absolute volume of 1929, it is still regarded as inadequate, when viewed in relation to the millions added to the population, the increased productivity, the almost unmeasurable capacity for consumption by the American people and by foreign markets. In the simplest terms the key to recovery according to this view, is in increased production first and foremost. This can be done only by encouraging capital investment; that will automatically bring more employment, more pay rolls, larger purchasing power, greater profits, opportunities for investment, and therefore the inducement for further savings. This increase in production can come only from unfettered private enterprise. This in turn can come about only if the restrictions now imposed by government and government activities are removed or substantially lightened. Then, this school holds, investment will feel free, safe, and encouraged to flow into plant expansion, production, and employment, and will bring about a general vitalization of the national economy. The cycle, accordingly, should begin by lightening taxes on corporations, lessening government regulation of investments, easing control of banks; the government, to make this possible, should reduce its expenditures for relief and cease expanding its social-security structure. It should reduce its interference with private enterprise by withdrawing from such proper fields of private capital investment as housing, banking, export; the disturbances introduced into the agricultural industry by the various devices of agricultural administration should be discontinued or minimized; insofar as financial assistance is offered by government it should go rather into loans to such enterprises as railroads, defense construction, possibly utilities.

The interpretation of events in the past few decades from this vantage point sees the depression as greater but not essentially different from others, except as it has been aggravated and prolonged by government's overambitious undertakings in social security, housing, agricultural subsidies, the pump-priming expenditures for public works, and the restrictive measures by legislation and administration that have limited free enterprise. The causes responsible for prolonging the depression and retarding recovery are regarded as largely different from those that led to the collapse in 1929. A reconstruction of predepression economy in the majority of its features is regarded as possible and desirable, and as likely to come about when the government withdraws into its appropriate sphere of activities.

The recommendations of this Conference are based on economic interpretations nearer the former than the latter point of view, but are not of necessity in opposition to the types of measures that might be practicable on the basis of either philosophy.

## Income and Employment

The citizen who tries to get a reasonably dependable and realistic picture of what really is happening to the economic condition of the country and to learn whether the chances of a livelihood are really getting better or worse is confronted with a complex set of facts and a complicated array of interpretations. Granting the proportion of low incomes of American families in 1935-36 to be as indicated by the studies quoted, to what degree has this condition been true, generally speaking, year in and year out, or was it true of the years around 1935 only? Is it becoming better or worse? Were conditions improving or deteriorating prior to 1935? Was there cause for substantial readjustment in 1936? If so, does the system of social measures embodied in the Social Security Act of 1935 constitute a sufficient remedy, or is it merely an intelligent and extensive method of meeting the worst phases of income deficit pending a more fundamental adjustment later on?

Considered, for example, from the point of view of aggregate national income, the story of 20 years, from 1919 to 1938, does not seem bad—\$63.6 billion in 1919, \$65.4 billion in 1938, and an average for the entire period of \$66.6 billion.<sup>21</sup> Within this range the national income has been as high as \$87.1 billion in 1929 and as low as \$42.3 billion in 1933. When the first 10-year period is compared with the second, there is a decline in average annual income of more than \$10 billion. There is, however, steady improvement since 1933, with a recession in 1938. "The broad movement over the period is clearly downward," says an authority on the subject; yet, he adds, "This decline over the period can hardly be considered an approximation to the secular [long time] trend \* \* \*." These figures take on a somewhat different character when adjusted to price changes in different years. Thus, if translated into 1929 prices, the general decline during this period is converted into an increase.<sup>22</sup>

The national income, despite its varied interpretations and combinations, has been generally utilized as the most satisfactory method of defining conditions of economic well-being. The figures do not give cause for alarm over our national economy. They do not indicate, however, who gets the money earned, whose livelihood is provided, and to what extent

<sup>21</sup> *National Income 1919-1938*, by Simon Kuznets. Occasional Paper No. 2, p. 7. National Bureau of Economic Research, New York, April 1941. See also *Survey of Current Business*, issued monthly by the U. S. Department of Commerce. The figures here are from Kuznets. There are occasional apparent discrepancies between national income as reported by the two sources but they make no essential difference in the general story.

<sup>22</sup> *National Income 1919-1938*, pp. 8, 17-18.

the different segments of the population benefit by or suffer from changes in the national income.

Every man in the country knows, however, that in the decade from 1930 to 1940 millions of people have been unemployed; other millions have had reduced employment; men, women, and children by the millions have had to consume their savings, exhaust their credit, receive help from relatives, and finally depend upon charitable assistance and public relief, mitigated for many by the several forms of social-security benefits. Some simple facts bearing on this problem may be drawn from the available records. Let us recall in the first place that not all the people, the 131,700,000 counted in the census of 1940, are expected to earn their own living. Children, housewives, and the aged are regarded as natural dependents; others are the "providers." These "providers," in census terminology "persons 14 years of age or over employed or seeking work," numbered almost 53 million in 1940 and comprised 40 percent of the total population.<sup>23</sup> Out of every 100 persons in the United States, therefore, on the average, 40 are expected to support themselves plus 60 others; or, in other words, every gainfully employed person is expected to earn enough to support  $2\frac{1}{2}$  persons, including himself or herself. This is a simple fact, but it means that in the entire population the average income of a gainfully employed person must be at least  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times enough to support one person.

How do these 40 in every 100 persons of the population earn their own and their dependents' livelihood? Information is not yet available from the census of 1940, but for 1939 it has been estimated that of all persons gainfully employed 81.2 percent were employees and 18.8 percent were "self-employed enterprisers."<sup>24</sup> The livelihood of 81.2 percent of those gainfully employed, and of at least that percentage of all persons, depends therefore on having a job; jobs and pay are the foundation of their living. If the self-employed farmers (classified as self-employed enterprisers) are added to this group (11.8 percent) the percentage rises to 93 percent of the total population. Employment, rate and steadiness of pay, farm prosperity—these are the foundations of their livelihood.

The two chief factors in the income of employed persons are the rate of wages and the steadiness of employment. If large numbers of families have income insufficient for a reasonable level of maintenance, it must be due principally to low rates of pay or to lack of sufficient employment or to both. Although no exhaustive analysis can be attempted here of either of these factors, certain highly significant and readily available data for part of the "employee" group may be cited as sufficiently suggestive of the trend.

<sup>23</sup> *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940*: Preliminary figures based on a 5-percent cross section.

<sup>24</sup> *Productivity, Wages, and National Income*, by Spurgeon Bell, pp. 4-10. Brookings Institution, Washington, 1940.

The 81.2 percent of the gainful workers who were employees, as of 1939, was made up of the following principal groups:

	<i>Percent of total gainful workers</i>
All employees .....	81.2
Wage earners .....	54.3
Clerical and sales employees.....	18.3
Professional employees.....	5.6
Managerial employees.....	3.0

Of the wage earners 63 percent were in industrial employment, as distinct from agricultural, trade, service, and other nonindustrial pursuits. More information of a continuous and comparable nature, and therefore useful for the present purpose, is available for industrial wage earners than for most other groups.

During the 30 years from 1899 to 1929 the number of wage earners in manufacturing industries increased—with some fluctuations—by 68.5 percent and the man-hours of employment by 44.2 percent. The difference in the two percentages is due in large part to a reduction of hours of work—one of the most prized achievements in the improvement of working conditions. Productivity of labor increased during this period even faster, 124.6 percent per man-hour, and this was reflected in the great rise in production—224 percent higher in 1929 than in 1899.<sup>25</sup>

In striking contrast to this growth in the number of industrial wage earners and their productivity, the general trend of employment during this period has been downward. The most dependable data illustrating this fact are those for employment in the manufacturing, railroad, mining, and construction industries.

Table 4, from a recent study by the Brookings Institution,<sup>26</sup> indicates a deep-seated change that cannot be disregarded, even though the terminal years themselves are not fully comparable. Those “attached” to industry, defined as “normally working or seeking work in the manufacturing, railroad, mining, and construction industries,” increased almost steadily from 13,720,000 in 1919 to 16,300,000 in 1938. But the number “employed”<sup>27</sup> declined from 12,581,000 in 1919 to 10,256,000 in 1938. This gives a relative unemployment, for 1919 and 1938, of 8 percent and 37 percent, respectively. In 1935—the year for which the data of the consumer-purchases study and the national health survey were obtained—the percentage of unemployed was 36 percent. The year of relative recuperation, 1937, still shows 26 percent. Except for the bad years,

<sup>25</sup> *Employment Opportunities in Manufacturing Industries of the United States*, by Frederick C. Mills, p. 4. National Bureau of Economic Research Bull. 70. New York, September 25, 1938.

<sup>26</sup> *Productivity, Wages, and National Income*, p. 21.

<sup>27</sup> Estimated by dividing total wages paid by the annual average earnings per employed wage earner.

1921 and 1922, no single year prior to 1930 gives more than 16 percent unemployment, whereas the last 9 years of the period show, with two exceptions, a range of 30 percent to 48 percent unemployment.

Table 4.—*Estimated average annual earnings of industrial wage earners, 1919-38*<sup>1</sup>

Year	Aggregate earnings (in millions of dollars)	Number of wage earners (in thousands)		Percentage of unemployment <sup>3</sup>	Average annual earnings	
		Employed	Attached <sup>2</sup>		Employed workers <sup>4</sup>	Attached workers <sup>5</sup>
1919.....	15, 369	12, 581	13, 720	8	\$1, 222	\$1, 120
1920.....	18, 593	12, 538	13, 960	10	1, 483	1, 332
1921.....	13, 081	10, 053	13, 800	27	1, 301	948
1922.....	13, 661	10, 924	13, 960	22	1, 251	979
1923.....	17, 188	12, 509	14, 090	11	1, 374	1, 220
1924.....	16, 492	11, 883	14, 190	16	1, 388	1, 162
1925.....	17, 096	12, 230	14, 280	14	1, 398	1, 197
1926.....	18, 010	12, 765	14, 360	11	1, 411	1, 254
1927.....	17, 793	12, 558	14, 420	13	1, 417	1, 234
1928.....	17, 596	12, 391	14, 450	14	1, 420	1, 218
1929.....	18, 267	12, 832	14, 480	11	1, 424	1, 262
1930.....	15, 187	11, 359	14, 520	22	1, 337	1, 046
1931.....	11, 309	9, 430	14, 600	35	1, 199	775
1932.....	7, 536	7, 675	14, 700	48	982	513
1933.....	7, 376	8, 061	14, 840	46	915	497
1934.....	9, 242	9, 335	15, 080	38	990	613
1935.....	10, 521	9, 942	15, 430	36	1, 058	682
1936.....	12, 644	11, 064	15, 800	30	1, 143	800
1937.....	14, 794	11, 921	16, 100	26	1, 241	919
1938.....	12, 062	10, 256	16, 300	37	1, 176	740

<sup>1</sup> *Productivity, Wages, and National Income*, p. 21. "Wage earners" comprises employment in manufacturing, railroads, mining, and construction. These industries represent about 90 percent of total industrial employment.

<sup>2</sup> Normally works or seeks work in industry.

<sup>3</sup> Based on 2 preceding columns.

<sup>4</sup> Aggregate earnings divided by the number of employed wage earners.

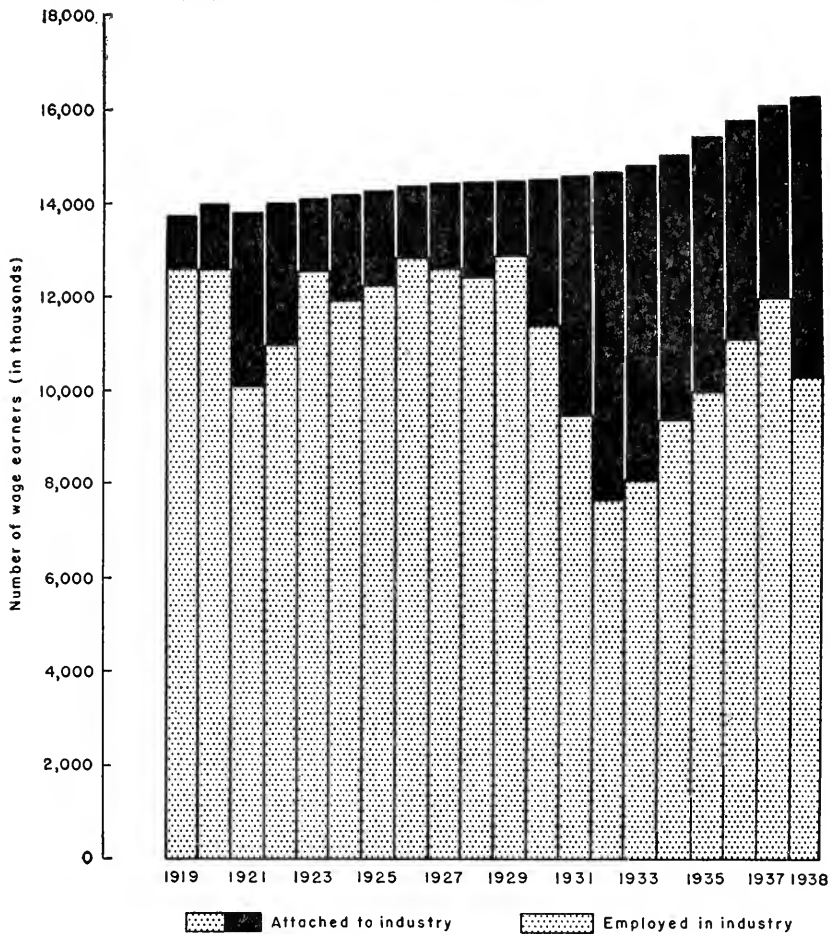
<sup>5</sup> Aggregate earnings divided by the number of attached wage earners.

So far as the worker and his dependents are concerned, unemployment in 1940 was still the major factor in the problem of economic security. Unemployment is, of course, merely a symptom and an effect of fundamental economic dislocation. It cannot be remedied in itself, as an independent entity. Its presence and extent, however, are an indication of the insecurity of the wage-earning population; furthermore it is intimately related to the difficulties of the farmer, the bulk of whose product must ultimately be sold to the worker if it is to be sold at all.

Estimating the unemployed has become a major task for economists of the day. No authoritative figures exist, but numerous estimates are constantly being made. The figures calculated by various specialists range for 1938 from a low of 10,695,000 by the National Industrial Conference



Chart 19.—Number of wage earners attached to industry and number employed in industry; United States, 1919–38<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Industries included—manufacturing, railroads, mining, and construction—represent about 90 percent of total industrial employment. Based on data from *Productivity, Wages, and National Income* (Brookings Institution).

Board to a high of 12,363,000 by the Alexander Hamilton Institute.<sup>28</sup> Even in 1929 the number was estimated variously between 469,000 and 3,610,000, and in 1933, when unemployment was at its peak, estimates ranged between 12,773,000 and 14,723,000. (See chart 22, p. 114.)

This unemployment is, it must be remembered, the darker side of what has been potentially, and in many ways has been actually, a period of expanding economic and social promise: Productivity has been soaring; volume of production has, after the worst of the depression, surpassed even the 1929

<sup>28</sup> *Wasted Manpower*, by Corrington Gill, p. 116. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York, 1939.

high; national income adjusted for changing prices has righted itself; hours of labor have diminished; rates of wages have risen; labor organization has progressed. But the lesser hours per week of the employed worker do not assure him regular earnings, and the "shorter hours and higher wages" of the man with a job do not support the family of the jobless.<sup>29</sup> As summarized by Spurgeon Bell,<sup>30</sup> for the period 1919–38 for industrial wages:

"*Hourly earnings* [over the 20 years] have shown a very great increase. In money terms the rise since the early twenties has been roughly 20 percent, and in terms of real purchasing power it has been over 45 percent.

"*Weekly earnings* have shown no corresponding advance. In money terms there has been actual decline of approximately 10 percent—though in consequence of the decline in the cost of living *real* weekly wages show an increase of about 10 percent. The relatively poor showing in the matter of weekly earnings reflects the decrease in the number of hours worked per week.

"*Annual earnings* of workers attached to industry have shown a very substantial decline. In terms of money wages the decrease was over 30 percent, and even with allowance for the change in the cost of living it was something like 20 percent. Outright unemployment and intermittent periods of unemployment explain the restriction of annual earnings."

The conclusion seems inevitable, therefore, that the economic structure as it existed in 1940 is faulty; that automatic readjustment along classical lines of thought and in keeping with nineteenth-century conditions cannot be depended upon; that unemployment even as a present condition requires far-reaching remedial measures, but as a symptom it demands searching and fundamental remedies—remedies that are neither simple, nor certain, nor replicas of past remedies.

It would seem reasonable in the light of these considerations not to count too much on war-induced prosperity, and to plan not so much on the chances of a return of the "golden age," but rather on the more somber possibility that the economic trends operating since the 1920's may be a suggestion of the future trend of economic life. In that case it may be well to accept, at least tentatively, these principles as guides for economic readjustment:

<sup>29</sup> The "employed" industrial wage earner (see table 4) earned \$1,222 in 1919, a "boom" year. Earnings increased, with small fluctuations, in dollars if not in purchasing power, to \$1,424 in 1929, sank to \$915 in the bottom year of the depression, 1933, and by 1938 came up to \$1,176 again. From \$1,222 to \$1,176 is not a serious drop; with the changes in the cost of living it may represent an addition of some \$150, despite reduction in working hours, and thus it manages to rise above the \$1,261 standard of income required for the "maintenance level" of the four-member family.

All this, however, is the story of those employed. If the fortunes of the "attached" worker (which includes the employed and unemployed in a given industry) reflect the effect of mass unemployment, then this seeming improvement in the income of the worker with a job is only a part of the truth. The "attached" worker's income went through the same type of change as that of the employed: \$1,120 in 1919, \$1,262 in 1929, \$740 in 1938. The drop from 1919 to 1938 is 34 percent. Lower prices offset some of this decline, but unemployment remains the dominant factor.

<sup>30</sup> *Productivity, Wages, and National Income*, pp. 23–24.

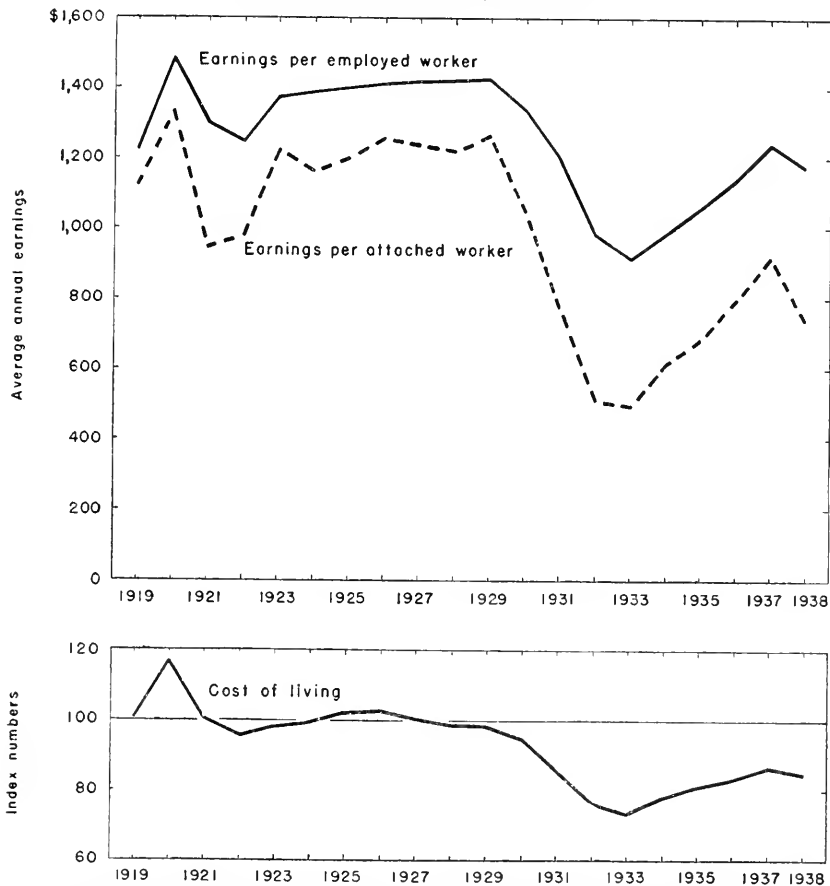
(1) That the increase in national income should favor first and preferably the low-income groups in the population.

(2) That the channel for this increase must be chiefly through expanding employment with adjustments of the agricultural industries to accompany it.

(3) That deliberate planning, stimulation, and supplementation of employment by government is necessary, as well as the facilitation and regulation of private enterprise.

(4) That in addition to these clearly economic measures, the low-income groups should be further benefitted by expansion of the public services in welfare, health, and education, to be available to the general body of citizens under permanent governmental auspices, financed by public funds.

Chart 20.—Average annual earnings of industrial wage earners and cost of living; United States, 1919–38<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Industries included—manufacturing, railroads, mining, and construction—represent about 90 percent of the total industrial employment. Based on data from *Productivity, Wages, and National Income* (Brookings Institution).

The channeling of increases in the national income primarily to the low-income group rather than to the high-income and dividend-receiving group is good statesmanship, and—from the point of view of this Conference—an important phase of a child-welfare program. On purely economic grounds, however, such a program is equally important, as may be seen from the following suggestive analysis made by the National Resources Committee.<sup>31</sup>

It is estimated by the Committee that if full and balanced use were made of our manpower and our natural resources at our present level of technology (that is, preceding the defense-production program of 1940-41) the national income per annum would rise by approximately \$20 billion a year—an increase of nearly 30 percent over the 1939 figure (\$70 billion). Such a rise in the national income would bring some general improvement for everyone. Some part, at least, of the \$20 billion would be spent for more shoes, flour, vegetables—things that everyone needs. There would be more income for people in general, but, by the best data now available, proportionately still more for those who already have higher incomes.

Would it make any difference in the long-run stability of our economy if this additional \$20 billion were distributed among various income levels in a different proportion from that indicated as obtaining at present? If so, does that possibility carry any lesson for economic reconstruction and for higher living levels for the majority of the people of the country?

According to present spending habits, if the present proportional distribution of family income remained constant, 30 percent of the total increase would go into savings. Assuming the same price level, increase in savings would be double the increase in any other single general item of the expenditure schedule, such as food, clothing, transportation, and so forth. Food and housing together would claim only 26 percent of the additional \$20 billion.

On the other hand, what would happen if the additional \$20 billion were made available in such a way as to raise the floor or minimum of family income to \$1,250 a year, the remainder being distributed in the income brackets from \$1,250 to \$2,000? Savings would still absorb 14 percent of the increase in income.

Or let us imagine an arbitrary limit of 10 percent in the proportion of the increase which becomes savings. With a limited percentage to savings and with our present patterns of spending, not only would absolute amounts spent for goods and services increase, but the percentage of the additional \$20 billion that goes to pay for clothes, doctors, dentists, automobiles, and recreation would increase also.<sup>32</sup> That is, a larger proportion would be

<sup>31</sup> *Consumer Expenditures in the United States; estimates for 1935-36*, pp. 153-195. National Resources Committee, Washington, 1939.

<sup>32</sup> These three hypothetical distributions of an added \$20 billion in the national income are developed in *Consumer Expenditures in the United States*, appendix C.

spent in keeping the economic machine running in its production of goods and services than in searching at home or abroad for investment opportunities.

The tradition inherited from a period when we were still settling frontiers encouraged saving and plain living as against expenditures for automobiles, clothes, and recreation. But, as our frontiers became settled and our resources developed, the stability of our economy came to depend rather on spending to buy the things that we are geared to produce. Only in this way can people be employed and have incomes to purchase the products of farms and factories. Higher expenditures for food, housing, medical care, automobiles, clothing, and even tobacco and recreation will raise farm incomes and keep people employed with less fluctuation and greater security than the diversion of added income to savings.

What are the measures from which we may expect both an increase in the tempo of the national economic life and also some help toward providing for the pressing and immediate needs of the many millions of American families and children? In the past a variety of measures have raised the incomes of families in this country. Trade unions through their bargaining power have been effective in maintaining or increasing wage scales. The twentieth century has seen the growth of minimum-wage and maximum-hour regulation, and there is now a national basis for this type of protection in the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, although many categories of workers are still excluded from the provisions of this act. State laws have also developed the principle of wage and hour regulation. Regulation of industrial home work has grown and has had the effect of raising earnings in some groups. The restriction of child labor in industrial employment is effective not only in protecting children directly but in eliminating the competition of these very low wage earners from the labor market.

Public policy has also directed its attention to the problems of low-income farmers. Measures such as the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, the credit activities of the Farm Security Administration, and provisions such as the Farm Tenant Act have been developed to protect and improve land use, to stabilize and increase farm prices, to strengthen farm credit, to stabilize farm populations. All these measures in industry and agriculture have assisted in raising incomes in large groups of American families.

Several points of view color our approach to the way in which long-run improvement may come about. These might be considered as four rather different premises, yet shading into one another at many points in regard to specific programs of action.

There are those who hold that economic life functions best under competition among individuals with equal opportunities. To supply the framework in which this system could work government must limit special

privileges and create substantial equality of opportunity through education, health protection, and other services. It must constantly aim to help people to help themselves, but when individuals are temporarily too weak to protect themselves, it must supply safeguards, such as minimum-wage legislation and relief and work programs, as temporary measures. As improvement depends on initiative, government is obligated to develop that initiative not in a special group only but in all groups.

A second point of view is held by those who assume that in the main private enterprise will carry our economic processes, but that defects in the system must be corrected by governmental action, even if this involves an extension of governmental activity in the economic sphere. The role of government is to compensate for failures in the economic system.

A third approach assumes that our economy has become so specialized that it is incapable of functioning in a coordinated manner at full capacity unless its various parts are centrally controlled. It calls for a comprehensive plan, consciously adopted, to produce the goods and services which society needs.

A still different view assumes that there are many causes—psychological, technical, institutional—which account for the failure of our system to maintain a balance between production and consumption. It holds that lines of improvement are uncertain and that a pragmatic approach to problems should prevail, accepting and retaining measures which experience finds effective.

From all these points of view some common factors in long-run improvement can be singled out. Steps toward recovery should be made with a long view toward elimination of extreme fluctuations. Such a long-term program would depend on two things: Suitable capital outlet to carry on production at the level of full employment and sufficient redistribution of income to redirect more income into consumption and less into savings and thereby sustain purchasing power for the goods produced.

If our problem is to be met in a Nation-wide manner, the Federal Government must act as the major equalizing agent. Through governmental economic-assistance programs the lowest incomes are raised at the expense of higher ones. Through Federal legislation a floor for wages is maintained below which the lower-paying industries are not to go. Through Federal equalization public services, such as schools and health administration, can be maintained at Nation-wide standards with the costs distributed where they can best be borne.

These programs need not be so costly as might first be thought. They will be unduly costly only if each effort is made without coordination with other efforts. The service part of a work program, for instance, can well be designed to extend and supplement the services for promoting child health and welfare, much of which has been done with unusual success. But there is a large field here for further coordination and planning.

Furthermore, some projects, such as low-cost housing on a mass-production scale, could be made in large measure self-liquidating.

Of primary importance in the consideration of equity and adequacy of services are the unequal needs and resources of the various State and local governments. Just where the need is greatest the financial ability to meet that need may be least. This difficulty is increased by political and legal restrictions on State taxing powers, which make most of the progressive taxes unavailable or self-negating to any but the Federal Government. Because of interstate rivalry and the inability of the States to tax interstate commerce, the income, inheritance, and gift taxes which form an important share of the revenues of the Federal Government have brought relatively small sums into State treasuries. This has forced reliance on such regressive measures as the retail sales tax, which affects low-income earners disproportionately, and the general property tax, which bears particularly hard on farmers and small-home owners and tenants. In order, therefore, to raise any large amount of additional revenue, the States would be forced to increase the types of taxes which are already a serious burden to those who can least afford to pay them. The Federal Government, on the other hand, is able to spread the expense of new programs to those groups, both geographic and social, which can most easily bear the burden.

### Social Insurance

Part way between far-reaching reconstruction of the national economy and measures for offering assistance to those in economic distress is the system of social insurance. The principal feature that sets apart this system from those economic measures that are directed to the raising of basic incomes of the worker is the fact that it is addressed to interruptions and cessations of income rather than to rates of income. Such interruptions may be due to unemployment, illness, age, superannuation, accident, occupational disease. In the life of the worker one or more of these interruptions are almost certain to come—few can escape all of them all the time. The probabilities are that the general run of workers will experience some interruptions of this type with sufficient frequency—this at least has been past experience—to cause a substantial reduction in his family's income as it might be calculated from his rate of wages alone. If some type of social insurance is available against these probable interruptions, the benefits expected may be regarded as, in a sense, part of the family's resources. To the extent that such insurance actually exists in this country, it is a family resource—a potential source of supplementary income.

Insurance is a device for guaranteeing economic resources to individuals at times of special need arising from common hazards. All insurance, commercial and voluntary as well as governmental, is "social" in the sense that it is a sharing of risks for mutual protection. The risks are losses to which

all the insured are liable and for which a forecast of the probable incidence in the group can be made, although prediction for any individual is impossible. The protection is assured by small periodic contributions from all participants, which form a fund to aid each one as the hazard strikes.

The term "social insurance" is used for governmental systems, designed to protect a part of the population that is not able, or is not likely of its own initiative, to buy insurance through commercial channels. It is a form of compulsory saving and, as found in practice, has some features of taxation. The funds are derived from special taxes on pay rolls or wages or both, sometimes supplemented by government contributions from general revenues. Eligibility for benefits depends not on destitution of the insured but on the payments previously made by themselves or their employers. The insured person has a contractual right to specified benefits if he has met specified conditions. Social insurance is not "public assistance."

Interest in social insurance was slow to develop in the United States. The first measure was passed by the Congress in 1908 to provide compensation for industrial injuries sustained by employees of the Federal Government. By 1940 a network of State laws providing for workmen's compensation all but covered the country; a Federal-State system of unemployment compensation is in operation in every State and Territory; a Federal unemployment-insurance and retirement system for railroad workers, including annuities for the totally and permanently disabled, and a general Federal system of old-age and survivors insurance for wage earners in industry and commerce are in operation.

#### ***Workmen's Compensation.***

Workmen's compensation for injuries received in the course of employment—perhaps the best known and in many ways a pioneer form of labor legislation—has spread since the law protecting Federal employees was passed in 1908. By the end of 1940 there were statutes superseding common-law remedies and the principle of employers' liability in all the States but Mississippi. These laws vary, however, as to coverage, benefits, and procedures, and the actual protection provided by them, although one of the greatest achievements in protection of the worker through social legislation, is not so great as the extent of legislation might indicate. Thirty of the State laws do provide compensation for some or all occupational diseases, as well as for accidents, but no State law covers all employments. It is estimated, for example, that not more than 40 percent of the gainfully employed workers of the country are protected. Among the other 60 percent are many who most need such protection. Although there has been a tendency toward increasing the amount of benefits and reducing the "waiting period" in case of injury, it is estimated that still the injured workman receives scarcely more than 40 percent of his wage loss, even in States with



liberal laws. In many States administration is reported as seriously impaired by "political turnover of personnel" and "deficient support."<sup>33</sup>

Standardization of the State workmen's compensation laws has been discussed ever since the early laws were passed, but for the most part amendments have been the result of local bargaining and compromise. As a result the diversity among the States has tended to become even greater, and in some of the States the law has become so intricate, confused, and technical that lawyers have an increasing part in the settlement of claims. No reasonable approximation to uniform State laws seems, indeed, to have been achieved except where some integration with the Federal Government, as in the case of the Social Security Act, was made part of the State law.

According to estimates of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, industrial accidents in the United States in 1938 resulted in the death of 16,400 persons, permanent injury of 98,900, and temporary disability in 1,260,300 cases.<sup>34</sup> How many children were in the families of the men and women so killed or injured is not known. Obviously the number was large, and obviously industrial accidents and occupational diseases are a serious matter for the children in every family in which they occur. An equitable workmen's compensation law in every State, broad in scope and efficiently administered, will mitigate the hardships that befall children when their parents or other relatives are killed or injured at work.

### *Unemployment Insurance.*

The hazard of unemployment exists even in relatively stable occupations and in ordinary times. Unemployment insurance as a means of minimizing its hardships has been discussed in academic circles for many years. One or two legislative proposals were made after the depression of 1914-15, and bills were introduced in several States during the 1920's. In the early 1930's a number of States appointed commissions to study unemployment insurance, and many reports and recommendations were under consideration. The first system was established by Wisconsin in 1932. This was the only one in operation when the Federal Social Security Act was passed in 1935.

A cooperative Federal-State unemployment-insurance system was one of the 10 social measures incorporated in this act. It levied a uniform Federal pay-roll tax on employers of 8 or more persons throughout the United States, except in certain excluded categories, with the proviso that in States with unemployment-compensation laws approved by the Social Security Board employers might credit their contributions to the State unemployment fund against their obligations to the Federal fund, up to

<sup>33</sup> Workmen's Compensation, by Marshall Dawson. *Social Work Year Book*, 1941, pp. 609-613. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1941.

<sup>34</sup> Industrial Injuries in the United States During 1938, by Max D. Kossoris and Swen Kjaer. *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (October 1939), p. 869.

90 percent. The Federal Government undertook to meet the entire cost of administering approved State laws.

So effective was this legislation in stimulating State action that within 4 years benefits were being paid under approved laws in all the States and Territories and the District of Columbia. The last of the 51 jurisdictions to establish approved systems, Illinois and Montana, began payments in July 1939.

In the fiscal year ended June 30, 1940, the first full year of payments throughout the 51 jurisdictions covering continental United States and the 2 distant Territories, benefit payments amounted to \$482,507,000. Collections during the year were \$853,955,000, and at the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 1940, the fund available for benefits stood at \$1,707,046,000.<sup>35</sup> In addition, benefit payments amounting to nearly \$15,000,000 in approximately the same period were certified under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.<sup>36</sup> The average weekly benefit for total unemployment paid in June 1940 under the State unemployment-compensation laws was \$10.42.

The unemployment-compensation laws of the States, like the workmen's compensation laws, vary considerably as to details, but largely because of their tie-up with Federal legislation their basic provisions are much alike. Most of them have provisions which exclude a substantial portion of the gainfully employed persons from benefits. Generally speaking, they exclude the employments exempt from the Federal unemployment tax—agricultural and casual labor, domestic service in private homes, any form of government service, employment on vessels on navigable waters, employment for nonprofit organizations—although certain extensions are made by a few States. About half the States require participation only by employers who have 8 or more employees for 1 day or more in each of 20 weeks in the year; but the tendency is toward extending benefits to smaller labor forces, and 11 States include employers even with only 1 employee. There is usually an initial waiting period of 2 weeks before payments are due. Benefits are adjusted to previous earnings, usually within the limits of a fixed maximum and minimum. A maximum for the duration of benefits is set by all States, 16 weeks within 52 being the limit in the majority of the States.

An efficient public employment service is an essential adjunct to an unemployment-compensation system. From the beginning there was close collaboration, as required by the terms of the law, with the United States Employment Service, then in the Department of Labor. On July 1, 1939, the Employment Service was shifted to the Social Security Board and

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<sup>35</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 8 (August 1940), p. 24.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34. Railroad workers were excluded from coverage under State laws as of July 1, 1939, and came under the provisions of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.

merged with the Board's Bureau of Unemployment Compensation to create the Bureau of Employment Security. This reorganization at the Federal level has furthered integration in the States, where the general pattern now is one agency for the two functions. The performance of the Employment Service in connection with the national-defense program in the spring and summer of 1940 "has constituted strong evidence of the vital significance of this joint program for job security, and has in all likelihood cemented its position as the key agency in the labor market for many years to come."<sup>37</sup>

Unemployment compensation cannot be expected to provide for protracted periods of unemployment, but it should be a first line of defense for workers who lose their jobs. Under the present laws "\* \* \* it is still a question whether the duration of benefits and the level of benefits are such as to provide a secure place for unemployment compensation in the security program of the Nation."<sup>38</sup> Benefit payments frequently are less than relief allowances or W. F. A. wages, and they often cease before the worker is again employed. Moreover, since benefits are based on previous earnings, it is the lowest-paid workers—those least able to provide from their own resources against a period of unemployment—who receive the smallest amounts. Clearly the system needs to be developed much further before it will function as an effective insurance against interruptions of the worker's income due to unemployment.

#### *Old-Age Insurance.*

Old-age insurance is intended to deal not with interruption of income so much as with its probable cessation through old age; perhaps even more it is to serve as a means of avoiding the unhappiness and fear that have been the companions of the aging worker and of the family on which he may become a burden. A Federal system of contributory old-age insurance for workers in industry and commerce<sup>39</sup> was established also by the Social Security Act of 1935, and it was transformed by amendments in 1939 into the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance that has been in full operation since January 1, 1940. This is wholly a Federal system, requiring no action by the States. It is financed by Federal pay-roll taxes shared equally by employers and employees and is administered by the Social Security Board uniformly throughout the country.

It is of utmost importance to recognize that this new social provision is a true family resource, which means a resource for children as well, and will

<sup>37</sup> Unemployment Compensation, by Ewan Clague. *Social Work Year Book, 1941*, pp. 567-577.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 576.

<sup>39</sup> All employees of the railroad in lustry are insured by a Federal retirement system established by the Railroad Retirement Act of 1935 and the amendatory act of 1937, which is administered by the Railroad Retirement Board. The system provides relatively high annuities (to a maximum of \$120 a month) for employees retiring on account of age or disability, survivor annuities, death benefits, and pensions to individuals who were on the pension or gratuity rolls of the carriers. (Retirement Payments for Railroad Workers, by A. G. Silverman and Joseph J. Senturia; *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 7 [July 1939], pp. 3-21.) For a considerable number of workers old-age security will involve the provisions both of this system and of old-age and survivors insurance.

be so increasingly as its benefits develop. It is not just a pension for the aged man or woman. In the present system<sup>40</sup> the family is the unit of protection, rather than the individual, and the social purpose of relieving society of part of the burden of dependency due to age or death is prominent. The emphasis is less on strict individual equity than on adequacy of benefits to provide minimum subsistence. The amendments of 1939 also increase materially the payments that will be made in the next few years and postpone increase in taxes, which will reach the maximum of 3 percent on both employers and employees in 1949.

Monthly benefits are payable to insured workers retiring at the age of 65 or over, their wives, if aged 65 or over, and their children under 16 (under 18 if attending school); to the widows of insured workers if or when they (the widows) reach the age of 65, or regardless of age if they have in their care children of the deceased; and in certain cases to surviving parents 65 years of age or over who had been dependent on the deceased. Lump-sum payments to the estate are provided in the case of insured workers who die leaving no survivors entitled to a monthly benefit. Amount of the primary monthly benefit payable to the retired worker is computed on the average monthly wage and the length of time insured, and this serves as the base for calculating supplemental benefits for wives, widows, children, and parents. Every primary insurance benefit must be at least \$10 a month, and the total of all monthly benefits, primary and supplemental, payable with respect to an individual's wages, is limited to a maximum of \$85.<sup>41</sup>

This is only the beginning. These families—and the families of the other insured workers as they reach the age of 65 or die in succeeding years in the future—will receive a definite and assured monthly income for the rest of their lives (or until the widow remarries or the children grow up) ranging from \$10 to \$85 a month, according to previous earnings and family composition. These benefits will enable millions of families to do more for their children than they could do otherwise, and in many cases these benefits should obviate the necessity of asking for aid to dependent children or other forms of assistance.

<sup>40</sup> See Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance; a summary of the 1939 amendments (*Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 12 [December 1939], pp. 3-16) and Old-Age and Survivors Insurance, by John J. Corson (*Social Work Year Book*, 1941, pp. 385-386).

<sup>41</sup> By June 30, 1940, nearly 50,000,000 employee accounts for this system had been established. In the fiscal year ended June 30, 1940, amounts certified for monthly benefits and for lump-sum payments under both the 1935 and the 1939 provisions of the act amounted to \$17,600,000. Benefit payments under the Railroad Retirement Act totaled \$114,000,000 for the same period. Total assets of the trust fund, as of January 1940, were \$1,724,000,000. In the first 6 months of full operation under the amended act, January-June 1940, 108,604 claims for monthly benefits were allowed, of which 23,386 (21.5 percent) were for children under 18. The average amount of the benefits for children was \$12.29. (*Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 8 [August 1940], pp. 68, 79; and *Fifth Annual Report of the Social Security Board*, 1940, pp. 7, 50, 170, 174-175).

In the development of this system as an instrument for the protection of the individual and society the next steps clearly indicated are:<sup>42</sup>

- (1) Extension to include insurance against the hazard of total and permanent disablement, which, like old age, takes workers out of the labor market and makes them even more liable to dependency than the merely aged;
- (2) Appraisal of the policy of basing benefits on average monthly wage over a period that may include stretches of unemployment and employment in uncovered occupations; the present system tends to reduce the worker's "average monthly wage" and, hence, the worker's benefits, and to prevent some workers from qualifying for benefits; and
- (3) Extension of the protection to groups not now covered.

Present coverage is practically the same as for unemployment compensation, leaving without protection large groups of wage earners, as well as farm operators and other entrepreneurs and unpaid family workers in agriculture. Coverage of some of the large groups now excluded would present obvious administrative difficulties that will require further study.<sup>43</sup> It is expected that employees of nonprofit organizations will soon be brought into the system, as the early opposition on the part of some of these organizations has been replaced by an actively favorable attitude. It is also hoped by some leaders in the public-health field that the essential benefits of the system may be applied to patients with tuberculosis so that this disease—for years socially the most costly—might be relegated to the vestigial status, in this country, of cholera and smallpox.

In its administration of the law the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance utilizes some techniques and methods that are used in private insurance companies and others that are characteristic of social agencies. It "is developing new techniques which will enable it to assume the responsibilities of a public agency administering a social service, while not encroaching upon the activities of the beneficiaries or their use of benefits to which they are entitled as a matter of right." The system "still faces many tests," says a prominent official in the administration, but "the vital necessity for its further extension and development is patent."<sup>44</sup> The number of persons receiving public assistance is considerably larger at present than the number entitled to insurance payments. As the system matures and is extended it will provide support for increasing numbers who would otherwise be dependent upon relief.

<sup>42</sup> As summarized by John J. Corson in *Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (Social Work Year Book, 1941, pp. 385-386)*.

<sup>43</sup> On August 14, 1940, the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Social Security Act, Senator Wagner, sponsor of the original act, introduced a bill which would further liberalize its provisions in several respects. Among other changes, the proposed amendments would extend old-age insurance to virtually all wage earners not now covered and unemployment compensation to 5,000,000 more than at present, thus making both systems much more comprehensive and reducing greatly the inequities arising from shifts from covered to uncovered employment.

<sup>44</sup> John J. Corson in *Social Work Year Book, 1941, pp. 385-386*.

*General Characteristics of Social Insurance and Further Needs.*

A coordinated and comprehensive system of social insurance has a stabilizing effect on the national economy and on individual incomes. It spreads the costs of common hazards over both time and population and tends to keep purchasing power at a more even level through a period of time. The United States has several important parts of a comprehensive system in operation now, but they are not fully coordinated with one another nor with the public-assistance programs; none of them fully provides against the risk that is the object of its concern: costs are met entirely by taxes on wages and pay rolls, without contributions from the Federal Government, and thus are borne entirely, directly or indirectly, by the insured and the employer, not by "society"; and for some insurable risks there is not yet any system of insurance under government auspices.

The most conspicuous lack is health insurance, although loss of income because of sickness, combined with the demand that sickness makes for extra income, has long been recognized to be one of the leading causes of economic insecurity. Protection for permanently and totally disabled workers and their dependents might perhaps best be provided by an extension of old-age insurance. For those who are temporarily disabled the situation is in some respects similar to that of the temporarily unemployed, since the presumption is that they will return to work on recovery. A proposal for a Federal-State system of temporary-disability compensation was included in the National Health Bill,<sup>45</sup> which was introduced in the Senate on February 28, 1939, by Senator Wagner. Whether it can be provided most practicably in this way or by a separate system is not yet clear, but the need for provision in one way or another is certain.

All the existing systems of social insurance leave outside their protection large groups of wage earners as well as the self-employed. This operates to produce inequalities in the proportion of the population covered in different sections of the country and in different elements of the population. Benefits for injured and temporarily unemployed workers vary widely from State to State and in many cases are not large enough or do not continue long enough to obviate the need for public or private assistance. The provision in old-age and survivors insurance limiting the maximum monthly benefit to \$85 operates in the case of large families to prevent equal protection for all the children.

To secure substantive equality in the protection afforded workers in all occupations throughout the country standards of service—for coverage, contributions, benefits, personnel, and adjudication of claims—in all the systems of social insurance should be determined by the appropriate Federal authorities cooperatively. The Social Security Board, since January 1,

<sup>45</sup> S. 1620, 76th Cong., 1st sess. This bill proposed to implement the National Health Program developed by the Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities through its Technical Committee on Medical Care. No action was taken on the bill.

1940, has power to require the adoption of the merit system in the administration of State unemployment compensation, but the States have been slow to place the administration of their workmen's compensation laws on a merit basis. The kinds of personnel best adapted to such work and the best methods of training them are questions that require further study.

To make the insurance systems more truly "social" many believe (although there is no universal agreement on the point) that part of the costs should be met by the indirect beneficiaries, outside the insured themselves. This can be accomplished only by a governmental contribution raised by a tax that includes the population not covered by the insurance. It is argued that distribution of the costs in this way over the entire population would be more effective in stabilizing national purchasing power than the present method of financing, which places the whole burden on the wage earners and employers.

Social insurance even now helps, directly or indirectly, millions of children in the United States. Further developments and additions will assure them a greater amount of protection and will safeguard the welfare of millions more.

## Conclusions

One of the principal objectives of sound economic life in a democracy is that people shall be able to earn and administer their own incomes. Opportunity for every family to earn an adequate income is basic to the preservation of the democratic life and to the acceptance of its ideals by American children. The Nation's children, furthermore, must be able to look forward to improving economic conditions for themselves and in turn for their children. Another and increasingly important objective and function of government in a democracy under modern technological conditions is to assure adequate provision of all necessary public services to children, and indeed to all members of the community. The range and standards of these services are becoming an essential part of the American standard of living and of its democratic complexion.

In pursuance of this function it would seem unavoidable for the government to assume a far larger and more responsible share in the direction of the national economy than has been the case in the past. The provision of services to the people so as to achieve a more equitable distribution of the wealth produced is only one way—although a very important one—of achieving that end.

## Chapter VII

### Economic Assistance

#### Increase in Need and Dependence Since 1930

**D**URING the 1930's instability and contraction of income were the lot of so many Americans that unprecedented millions of them have been dependent on public or private assistance. Relative and limited periods of recovery in the general economy gave some surcease, and the increasingly effective measures of work relief and assistance have undoubtedly lightened the burdens of millions of families. But the depression as such continued. A general idea of the fluctuations in income and employment between 1929 and 1940 may be gleaned from charts 21 and 22. Directly and indirectly the huge program for national defense undertaken in the spring of 1940 undoubtedly will increase employment opportunities during the next few years. By the end of 1940, some improvement was already apparent.

How many families or persons have had the bitter experience of dependency at some time in the past decade we do not know. Guesses vary from a third to half of the entire population. We do not know how much need went unrelieved, nor how much of the apparent increase in need, as indicated by the increase in dependence, had existed previously but had not attracted attention. We do know the amount of money spent for public assistance of all kinds, the amount of earnings of persons employed under Federal work programs in each month beginning with January 1933, and the approximate number of households and persons receiving this money (charts 23 and 24).<sup>1</sup>

In January and February 1934, when employment under the Civil Works Administration was at its maximum, 8 million households, consisting of 28 million persons, of whom more than 11 million were children under 16 years of age, received public assistance or earnings from Federal work programs.<sup>2</sup> In November 1938, when by all the estimates the amount of

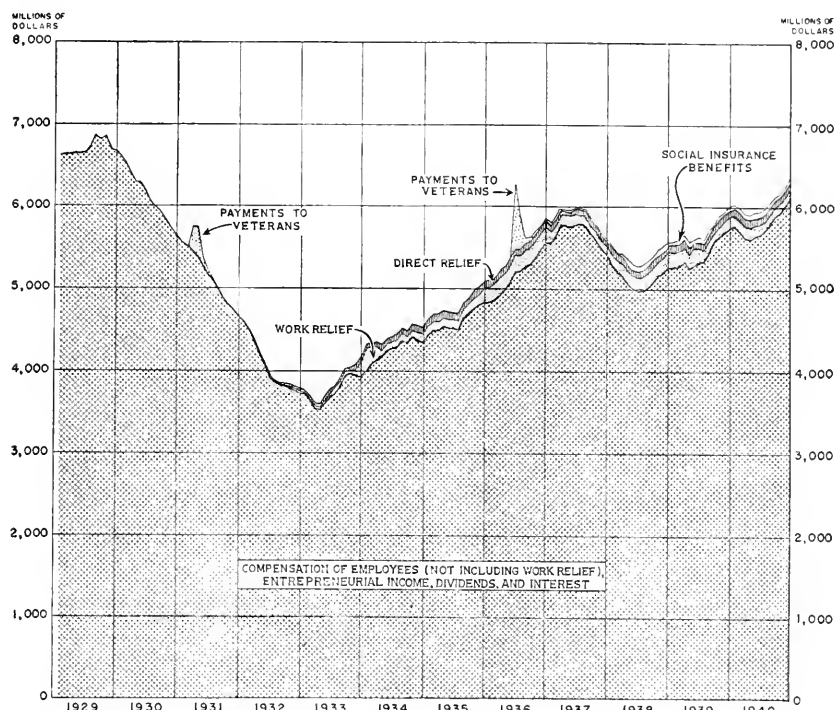
<sup>1</sup> There are no comprehensive records of private relief. See footnote 8, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (February 1940), pp. 54-55; table of estimated unduplicated number of households and persons, by months, January 1933-December 1939. This table is continued from month to month in subsequent numbers of the Bulletin. The number of children under 16 is estimated roughly by applying 40 percent (computed by various calculations) to the number of persons. The number of "households" includes households consisting of 1 adult and other households containing no children under 16. It includes also households of persons employed on certain Federal work projects, on which certification of need is not generally required. These numbered respectively 292,000 and 285,000 in January and February 1934; 378,000 in November 1938 and 306,000 in March 1940.



unemployment was less and employment under the Works Progress Administration was at its peak, the corresponding figures were over 7 million households, consisting of nearly 22 million persons and including 8 or 9 million children. In March 1940, before the usual seasonal reductions in relief began but under the reduced W. P. A. program of the fiscal year 1939-40, the estimated unduplicated totals were a little less than 6.5

**Chart 21.—Monthly income payments in the United States, January 1929–December 1940<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on index numbers supplied by National Income Division, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, U. S. Department of Commerce.

million households and over 18.5 million persons, of whom nearly 7.5 million were children under 16.

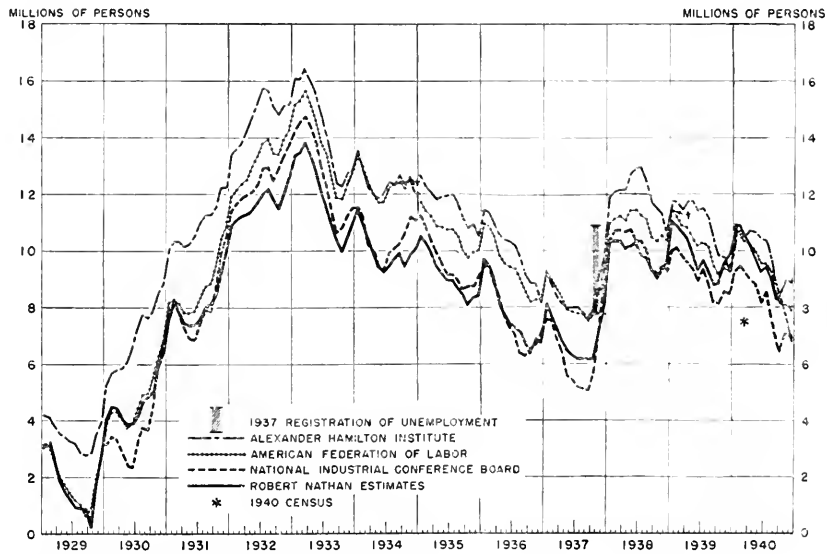
That was about 1 in 7 of the total population in March 1940, 1 in 6 in November 1938, and more than 1 in 5 in the opening months of 1934, compared with probably less than 1 in 100 in the corresponding months of 1929. The number in the spring of 1940 was more than the entire population of New England and the Pacific States combined.

The proportion of the country's children who received public assistance through their families was greater than the proportion of the general population that received public assistance; in the spring of 1940 it was more than a fifth of all the children in the country as compared with one-seventh

of the general population. This is to be expected, as families with small children not only are more likely to need assistance but are also more likely to receive it; and the more children they have the more likely they are both to need and to receive help.<sup>3</sup> When there are not enough relief funds to “go around” the households with little children are taken care of first.

Under conditions prevailing in America in 1940—and still more so in many of the years between 1930 and 1940—the number of persons receiving assistance cannot be assumed to be identical with the number who need it;

Chart 22.—Estimates of unemployment, January 1929–December 1940<sup>1</sup>

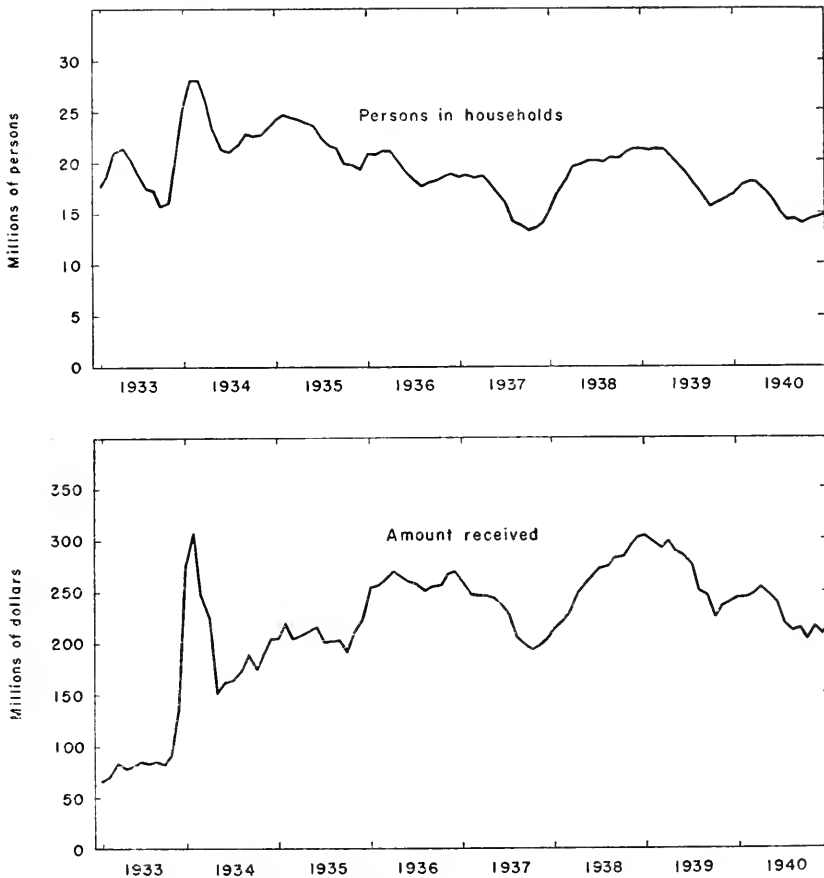


<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from *Social Security Bulletin*, February 1941, by permission; December 1940 added by Social Security Board.

nor can the amount of assistance given be assumed to be the amount needed. The length of relief rolls and the amount of money spent have not been, in these years, accurate measures of need. Rather, they have reflected

<sup>3</sup> Of the 931,379 urban bio-legal families covered in the National Health Survey of 1935–36, 16.4 percent were in households that reported some assistance from public funds within the year. Of the families with no children, 13.3 percent had received relief; of those with 1 child, 16.8 percent; of those with 2 children, 20.1 percent; and so on up to 58.4 percent of those with 9 children. These “relief families” included 18.8 percent of the individuals of all ages; 26.5 percent of the children under 16. (*The Economic Status of Urban Families and Children*, by I. S. Falk and Barkev S. Sanders; *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 5 [May 1939], pp. 25–34.) Rural families receiving relief in 138 counties in June 1935 had a higher proportion of children than had the total rural population of those counties. (*Rural Families on Relief*; Works Progress Administration Research Monograph XVII, Washington, 1938, p. 41.) In 13 cities in December 1935, 12.5 percent of the total population of over 9,000,000 was receiving assistance; 18.5 percent of the population under 16. (*Changing Aspects of Urban Relief*, by F. L. Carmichael and R. Nassimbene, pp. 1–43; Works Progress Administration [now Work Projects Administration], Washington, 1939.)

Chart 23.—Number of persons in households of recipients under public-assistance and Federal work programs and amount of assistance and earnings received; United States, January 1933–December 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Social Security Bulletin*, February 1941.

policies of administrative bodies, kinds of assistance given,<sup>4</sup> attitudes of the public, and amount of money "available."

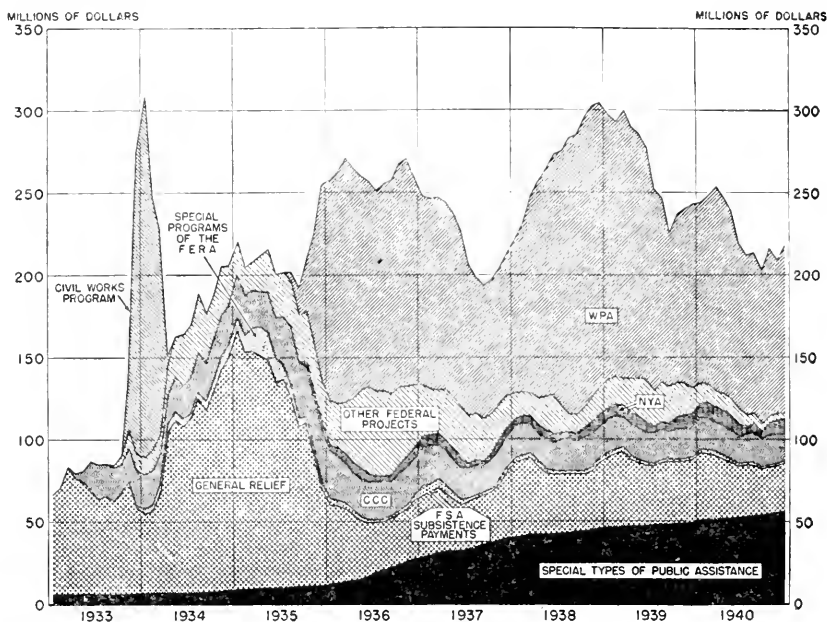
How many families were in need in the spring of 1940, or at any other time, and how much assistance they should have had, we do not know. "Need" is a relative term. Each new program of assistance, as well as advancing standards of living and increasing public sensitiveness, brings above the threshold a new layer of the population that previously had "managed" somehow without assistance. In the year ended June 30, 1938, for example, of the applicants accepted for old-age assistance 58 percent had received no form of aid, public or private, within 2 years, either directly

<sup>4</sup> As indicated in chart 24 in which the aggregate amount of assistance, as shown in chart 23, is divided into its principal components.

or as members of households;<sup>5</sup> of the families accepted for aid to dependent children the proportion was 33 percent.<sup>6</sup>

That for any considerable period the families of one-fourth of the children in the United States should continue to be dependent on public or private aid for the necessities of life is a prospect we cannot accept. That any of them should not get assistance when they need it, or should not get as much as they need, or the kind they need, is intolerable. Yet it seems

**Chart 24.—Public assistance and Federal work programs: Payments to recipients and earnings of persons employed in the continental United States, January 1933–December 1940<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from *Social Security Bulletin*, February 1941, by permission.

clear that this situation exists, and will continue until measures are taken to make it impossible.

In the preceding chapter the discussion centered on the type of measures for raising inadequate incomes or for providing substitute incomes, which would have to be incorporated in the general economic structure of the Nation through social insurance or readjustments in the economic foundations of production, consumption, and distribution. Those measures are admittedly the ones demanding the most incisive and far-reaching thought and national planning. Their effect should rebuild the national

<sup>5</sup> Relief Status of One Million Recipients Accepted for Old-Age Assistance, by Anne E. Geddes and Agnes Leisy. *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 12 (December 1938), p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Social Data on Recipients of Public Assistance Accepted in 1937–38: Pt. 2, Aid to Dependent Children (tables)*, p. 6. Bureau Memorandum No. 39, Bureau of Research and Statistics, Social Security Board, Washington, 1939.

economy. In the present chapter we deal exclusively with the more immediate problem of providing public assistance to those actually in need or in economic distress.

## Changes in "Relief" Since 1930

Along with the increase in need and dependence since 1930 has come a change in attitude towards relief and a revolutionary development in methods and resources.

The change in attitude is symbolized in the movement to substitute the term "assistance" for "relief," in revulsion against the associations "relief" has accumulated. Whatever it may be called, aid in case of need has come to be regarded more generally as a right,<sup>7</sup> both by those who supply it, however much they may begrudge it and deplore the necessity for it, and by those who accept or demand it, however much they may hate it. Methods of "relief" administration have become less obnoxious and less degrading, even though much still remains to be done.

The development of resources for assistance during the past decade has been chiefly in public funds. Private agencies, which increased their expenditures greatly in the early years of the depression, are now spending no more for financial aid to families under their care than in 1929.<sup>8</sup> Expenditures from public funds, which even before the depression were 3 or 4 times as great as expenditures by private agencies, have increased to the extent that in 1939 public funds supplied 99 percent of all the aid to families in their own homes,<sup>9</sup> and they amounted to 40 times as much as in 1929.<sup>10</sup>

Income received by the people of the United States from all sources in 1929 is estimated at not far from \$82 billion, of which only \$72 million, less than one-tenth of 1 percent, came from public relief funds; in 1939, at about \$70 billion, of which about \$3 billion, more than 4 percent, came from public relief funds (including work-relief wages). The increase in in-

<sup>7</sup> The statutes of every State contain mandates on the public-welfare officials to give relief to persons in need, provided they meet specified requirements of eligibility, which differ widely from State to State. In the State of Washington the courts have sustained the claim of a woman for old-age assistance as a "right," although her daughter was able and willing to support her. *Survey Midmonthly*, Vol. LXXVI, No. 9 [September 1940], p. 270.)

<sup>8</sup> There are no records of private relief that cover the whole country. In the 116 urban areas for which the Social Security Board publishes a monthly series beginning with January 1929, expenditures for relief from private funds rose rapidly in 1930, 1931, and 1932, until for the calendar year 1932 they were more than 5 times as great as in 1929. After 1932, in contrast with expenditures from public funds, which continued to increase through 1936, expenditures from private funds fell off each year, until in 1937 they were about at the level of 1929, and in 1938 a little below that level. In these 116 areas private funds supplied 24 percent of all the aid given in 1929; in 1938, although the amount spent from private funds was almost as much as in 1929, it constituted only seven-tenths of 1 percent of the total. In 1939 the amount again rose to just 1 percent of the total (*Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 4 [April 1940], p. 59). For the entire country expenditures from private funds in any year constitute a smaller proportion of the total than in these urban areas, as the private agencies outside of cities are comparatively few and small.

<sup>9</sup> Proportions are different in other forms of aid, such as care in hospitals and in other institutions.

<sup>10</sup> Based on table 3 (p. 59) *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (April 1940), and appendix table A (p. 53) *Survey of Current Business*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (February 1940).

come received from public relief was about one-fifth as much as the loss in income received from all other—i. e., normal—sources.<sup>11</sup>

To provide these increased public funds for relief, sources that hardly entered into practical calculations in 1930 have become of primary importance. State governments have assumed far greater responsibility than ever before for aiding their local units and equalizing resources among them. The Federal Government for the first time in our history has aided the States in providing relief and has carried on relief programs of its own.

### Present Provisions for Economic Assistance

Out of the exigencies and the experiments of the decade the outline for a Nation-wide system has emerged. The strengthening of existing elements and the addition of parts now lacking will contribute to economic security on a new pattern, through interrelated programs of social insurance and public assistance.

New features most directly affecting children in families whose normal sources of income are shattered, interrupted, or threatened date from the summer of 1935, when the Federal Government withdrew assistance to the States for general relief. At that time it set up a Federal work program for needy employable persons; it provided special help for farmers; and it inaugurated three public-assistance programs.<sup>12</sup> Older features that continue to be parts of our present provisions are the private family-welfare and relief agencies, the local public-welfare departments or officials administering general relief, with or without State subsidy and participation, and the less formally organized relief activities of churches, fraternal organizations, trade unions, and scores of other associations based primarily on social, trade, or other common interests.

Assistance by private agencies is extremely important to the families who receive it, but these families are now a very small proportion of the total number in need of assistance. Moreover, assistance by private agencies is not open as a right to any applicant. Each agency has its own ideas of its function and proper coverage. From the applicants coming to it, it selects those whom it regards as its special responsibility and considers itself equipped to help.

General relief, or general public assistance, is the modern name for poor

<sup>11</sup> Based on appendix table A (p. 53) *Survey of Current Business*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (February 1940).

<sup>12</sup> The Social Security Act of 1935 also provided for two new systems of social insurance (for unemployment and old age) and for Federal aid to the States in extending several kinds of public-health, vocational, and social-service activities. These, however, are not properly speaking programs of "economic assistance", providing income adjusted to need in individual cases. Unemployment compensation and old-age insurance, like the workmen's compensation previously in existence, are forms of social insurance, benefiting all the individuals covered by the system regardless of their need. Social insurance is a method of meeting common hazards by distributing risks and so of raising the general level of the economic resources of families. As such it is discussed in Chapter VI. The vocational, child-welfare, and public-health services for which Federal aid was provided by the Social Security Act are discussed in Chapters VIII, XI, and XII.

relief, which since colonial days has embodied the principle that society must support its members when they cannot support themselves. To the extent that it is available it is the final recourse for all who cannot get any of the specialized varieties of assistance.

### Criteria of Economic Assistance

How economic assistance is administered to families in need concerns every member of a democratic society. The larger the number of families needing assistance, the more important it is that the help they receive should be of such amount and such nature and should be given in such a way as to keep them, or enable them to become, acceptable fellow citizens. To this end, assistance must be accessible on equal terms to all in equal need; it must be given as a right, not as a favor; it must be given promptly when needed, not delayed until bitterness and resentment or despair have set in; it must be dependable; and it must be adjusted to changes in circumstances.

In amount it must be sufficient, when added to existing resources, not merely to keep the members of the family alive as so many animals, but to supply the material essentials of a home life that is acceptable to the community and bears some relation to the family's own standards. In form and in methods of administration it must be governed by the consideration that these families who are now dependent are fellow members of the American Commonwealth. We shall all have to pay for the consequences of methods that contribute to their deterioration, and we shall be paying a long time for methods that affect their children adversely.

Assistance must be given in such forms and in such a way as to preserve and stimulate resourcefulness, keep alive hope and ambition, guard the springs to action, and promote the prospect of restoration to a normal role in society. It must not humiliate or disqualify the individual for full participation in national life. If it does—by disfranchising recipients, by publishing their names, by giving them groceries or food orders instead of cash, by treating them with suspicion, by requiring them to discuss their intimate affairs in the hearing of strangers, by “chiseling” their allowances or holding them back when due, by embarrassing their children in the way free lunches are served and clothing is distributed—it is increasing the volume of dependence and inefficiency for the coming years and the coming generations.

Standards of adequacy—what items and how much of each are indispensable to a wholesome family life—have been developed through the years. They have tended to rise as the general standard of living has risen, as the importance of one element after another has been realized by those concerned with the effects of assistance on the recipients, and as the teachings of one body of knowledge after another have been assimilated and applied.

Long before 1930 it was generally agreed that the economic needs of a family can best be determined by reference to a basic budget, in which essentials are listed and analyzed so that they can be adjusted to families of varying composition, background, environment, and condition. The budget for a family, constructed in consultation with the family with the basic budget as a guide, can be translated into monetary terms by applying current prices. From the total cost so calculated the income of the family can be subtracted, and the result would indicate how much assistance is needed. Basic budgets worked out in times of prosperity often seem "unrealistic" to administrators and appropriating authorities when hard times come, although logically it would seem to be more important to maintain standards when millions of families are affected than when the number may be counted by thousands.

Families who need economic assistance often need other kinds of assistance as well. Whether they get it depends on whether facilities and resources are available, and also on whether the worker representing the agency on visits to the home recognizes the needs and feels a responsibility for seeing that they are met.

To ensure equitable determination of eligibility for aid, especially when there is any question as to "fitness" of the home, and to ensure consideration of the needs of the whole family—the needs relating to health and recreation, to social life and family relationships as well as the economic needs—high qualities in personnel are required. Members of the staff who have direct contact with applicants and recipients must have, in addition to familiarity with laws and rules of procedure, an understanding of human nature, a knowledge and appreciation of the customs and traditions of the people with whom they deal, an interest in and sympathy for them, a working acquaintance with the resources of the community and imagination in using them. Persons with such qualifications can be secured and retained only if adequate salaries are paid. They must have competent supervision in their local offices and from the State agency, and they must be free to do their work without political or other interference.

### Federal Work Programs

The largest single source of assistance for families in need of income has been the Work Projects Administration (Works Progress Administration until July 1939), which was created in the summer of 1935.<sup>13</sup> The kind of assistance it gives—wages for services performed—meets the needs of families in which the chief wage earner is unemployed better than any other kind of help now in operation.

<sup>13</sup> The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration (see pp. 246-248) primarily are not "relief" agencies, although allowances made by young men in C. C. C. camps to their families and assistance by N. Y. A. to students and to youths who have left school and cannot find work are helpful in many families in which there are younger children. Most of these families are receiving also one or more other kinds of assistance. The Public Works Administration has provided work for a large number of persons, but evidence of need is not required for this employment.



Employment on W. P. A. gives the family an earned income. Its purpose is to allow the family to continue its life in its own way under nearly normal relations to society, even if on a lower standard of living. The head of the family has the satisfaction of working for what he gets. For the children—if the father's wage is large enough to cover the family's needs—there need be no difference in home atmosphere and no deprivation of any of the elements essential to a good home life.

Although the major contribution of W. P. A. to the children of the United States is the work it gives and the wages it pays to their unemployed fathers, mothers, older brothers, and older sisters, it has also done a great deal for them in every State of the Union through its projects. Schools, libraries, and hospitals have been built, repaired, or enlarged. Gymnasiums, stadiums, athletic fields, parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, wading pools, tennis courts, handball courts, skating rinks, ski jumps, ski trails, and outdoor theaters have been constructed. Clothing, school lunches, and medical, dental, and nursing services have been provided. Nursery schools and play centers have been conducted. School and library books have been renovated. Music classes, concerts, art centers, and the children's theater,<sup>14</sup> have greatly extended the cultural opportunities of the children in America. The adult-education program has given their parents instruction in nutrition and in home making.

In the 5 years since W. P. A. was established it has given employment to more than 8 million individuals.<sup>15</sup> During the winter of 1938–39, before reductions began, an average of more than 3 million persons per month were employed on projects financed by W. P. A. funds.<sup>16</sup> If an average of 1.5 children under 16 years of age per worker is assumed, about 4.5 million children were dependent on W. P. A. earnings. That was 1 in 8 of all the children in the country. Limitation of the W. P. A. program to an average of 2 million workers during the fiscal year 1939–40 reduced the average number of children supported by it to something like 3 million, which still was more than the number dependent upon general relief and was about one-twelfth of all the children in the population.

Although the Federal Government in 1935 announced the intention of meeting the need caused by unemployment, W. P. A. has never provided for all the "employables" in need, not even for those eligible according to the terms of the various appropriation acts. On the whole, it has given work to only about half the number estimated to be unemployed, in need, and legally eligible.<sup>17</sup> At the end of February 1939, when there were 3 million persons on its pay rolls, 1,330,000 other employables were in need and eligible for employment on W. P. A., of whom 869,380 had been

<sup>14</sup> Conducted by the Federal theater project, which was abolished by the Congress in the summer of 1939.

<sup>15</sup> Statement by Howard O. Hunter, Acting Commissioner, Work Projects Administration, in an address before the United States Conference of Mayors, September 19, 1940.

<sup>16</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 7 (July 1940), p. 55.

<sup>17</sup> Work Relief, by Donald S. Howard. *Social Work Year Book, 1941*, pp. 598–609. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1941.

certified and were waiting for assignment.<sup>18</sup> The number certified would have been larger except that in many States the process of certification was suspended when no jobs were available, or was restricted by inadequate staff in the certifying agencies or by projects not appropriate to the qualifications or capacities of those available for certification. "You know," said the Acting Commissioner of W. P. A. to the United States Conference of Mayors in September 1940, when there were about 1,700,000 on the pay rolls, "that you are taking care of nearly a million workers who are qualified for W. P. A. employment but who cannot be assigned to W. P. A. projects because of the limitations of W. P. A. appropriations."

In some entire States, and in many localities in other States, no relief is available for "employables." In a large part of the country, therefore, employables who cannot get on W. P. A. are worse off than unemployables. For large families, moreover, and families with unusual needs, the "security wage" of W. P. A. does not give full security. These families must either get along without some essentials or must get them from some other source. Whether they get the needed supplementary assistance or not depends on their own aggressiveness and on local policies. Many local authorities do not give relief to families with a member employed on W. P. A. Many States and the District of Columbia do not accept for relief applicants who have an employable person in the family, whether or not he is on W. P. A.

Employment on W. P. A., moreover, has been subject to arbitrary reductions, not related to employment conditions,<sup>19</sup> when appropriations began to run low or changes of policy were introduced by legislation or by administrative decree. When rumors of impending lay-offs begin to circulate, or announcements of impending changes appear in the papers, apprehensiveness becomes general among those on the pay roll. Insecurity arises also from the system of "rotation" established by the relief appropriations acts of 1939 and of 1941, which required removal of all (except veterans, unmarried widows of veterans, and wives of unemployable veterans) at the end of 18 months' continuous employment on W. P. A. Persons removed for this reason are eligible for reinstatement after 30 days, if recertified as in need. But they cannot be reinstated unless there are vacancies, and the reduction of the program by one-third under the terms of the act of 1941 makes their chances of early reinstatement slight. It is well known that much hardship has resulted from this fact particularly in places where general relief is meager or is not extended to such cases.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Hearings before the subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, 76th Cong., 1st sess., acting under H. R. 130, pt. 2, p. 1370. Washington, 1939.

<sup>19</sup> In July 1940, W. P. A. employed 20 percent of the estimated number of unemployed persons; in July of the previous year, 24 percent. (Statement by Howard O. Hunter, Acting Commissioner, Work Projects Administration, in an address before the United States Conference of Mayors, September 19, 1940.)

<sup>20</sup> An inquiry by W. P. A. in November 1939 found that more than 87 percent of the 775,000 persons dropped in July and August in compliance with this provision were still unemployed and that half of those who were working were earning less than their former W. P. A. wages. One-fourth were back on W. P. A., one-fourth were receiving local relief, and many were living on surplus commodities. (W. P. A. press release, January 26, 1940.)

If employment on W. P. A. had been given to all the needy able-bodied unemployed, as was the announced intention when the program was established, its distribution over the country—among States, between urban and rural areas, among the various elements of the population—would have been strictly according to need. Theoretically distribution among the States of the jobs that have been provided through W. P. A., as of Federal funds for relief under F. E. R. A., has been according to need. But the “need” of a State is even harder to measure objectively than the need of a family or of an individual. In the absence of currently available information on the amount of unemployment and on financial status of State and local governments, it has not yet been possible to construct a satisfactory formula for allocating quotas to the States.

The Federal Administrator has had considerable discretionary power and there has been no procedure for open discussion of conflicting demands from States competing for larger allocations. “In the last analysis,” the Administrator testified in 1939,<sup>21</sup> “the distribution has represented the judgment of the Works Progress Administration.” This judgment has been based on “first-hand information and formal quantitative reports having a bearing on relief needs.” In 1940 he told a subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations<sup>22</sup> that he had of his own accord adopted a formula for allocations among the States as follows: 40 percent on the basis of population, 40 percent on the basis of estimates of unemployment, 20 percent at the discretion of the Federal officials on recommendations from regional directors.

Distribution of W. P. A. employment among the employable unemployed who are in need is determined partly by conditions imposed by the Congress, which vary from year to year, and partly by local interpretations of general rules and definitions and by local attitudes. “Employability” is interpreted as much in relation to the nature of the work project as in relation to the capacity of the individual. “Need” is an elastic term.

Under the 1941 law<sup>23</sup> priority must be determined “as far as practicable” on the basis of “relative needs.” Among applicants of equal need, preference must be given to veterans, widows of veterans, and wives of unemployable veterans. Employment of aliens, Communists, or members of “any Nazi bund organization” is prohibited, and every person employed is required to make affidavit that he is a citizen of the United States and is not a Communist, nor a member of any of the proscribed organizations.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Hearings before the subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, 76th Cong., 1st sess. acting under H. R. 130, pt. 2, p. 1423.

<sup>22</sup> Hearings before the subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, 76th Cong., 3d sess., making appropriations for work relief and relief, fiscal year 1941, p. 620. Washington, 1940.

<sup>23</sup> Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, fiscal year 1941.

<sup>24</sup> Aliens were debarred from employment in 1939. The rest of this provision was a new feature of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act for the fiscal year 1941. Less than 500 persons, out of 1,665,000 on the rolls the last week in June 1940, were dismissed for failure to execute the required affidavits. (*Survey Monthly*, Vol. LXXVI, No. 9 [September 1940], p. 270.)

With these exceptions, discrimination because of political affiliation or activity is forbidden, as well as discrimination because of race, color, or creed. Inasmuch as most of the children of aliens were born in this country, the citizenship requirement operates as a discrimination against thousands of American children who are themselves citizens.

Other discriminations arise from local attitudes. Although W. P. A. is a Federal program, it is partly dependent on States and localities for support and is largely dependent on them for its local character. Certification of need is generally the responsibility of county and city relief agencies, which have their individual ideas about what constitutes "need" and their individual reasons for getting as many persons as possible on W. P. A. or keeping as many as possible off. Although length of residence in a State is not supposed to be a consideration in certification of need, in reality it is a consideration in many places, especially in those where certification is given only to persons who have been in receipt of relief. Projects are initiated and sponsored by local authorities, who must consider the immediate and continuing cost, and must consider public opinion. If local authorities do not set up projects to employ women or Negroes or Mexicans, for example, then women or Negroes or Mexicans in those places cannot get employment on W. P. A.

In recent years there has been an increase in work-relief programs operated under State and local auspices, and by May 1940 such programs were in operation in some 25 States and employed an estimated 100,000 to 180,000 persons. This development is variously attributed to the inadequacy of W. P. A. employment quotas, denial of W. P. A. work to aliens, difficulties in the way of devising W. P. A. projects in rural areas, and reluctance of local authorities to sponsor projects that will increase local operating budgets.<sup>25</sup>

Unemployment has been, during the past decade, the major cause of need in the United States. It is a national problem, which States and local communities can do little to control. The need it causes has been recognized by the Federal Government as a national responsibility. But that responsibility has not been met in full. The work programs set up to that end are, even on the reduced scale in effect since July 1939, the largest—and the best—source of aid for the unemployed who are able to work. But they do not provide for all of them. They exclude aliens, whose children for the most part are American citizens. The "security wage" is not large enough for all families. Unforeseeable changes in the Federal work program are a prime obstacle to States and localities in

<sup>25</sup> Work Relief, by Donald S. Howard. *Social Work Year Book, 1941*, pp. 598-609.

their efforts to develop comprehensive State and local programs for all persons in need. The White House Conference on Children in a Democracy is therefore recommending the continuation, with greater flexibility, of public employment for the unemployed, under Federal auspices and in cooperation with State and local governments.

### **The Public Assistance Programs**

For three categories of "natural dependents" or "unemployables"—the needy aged, the needy blind, and dependent children deprived of parental care or support by certain specified contingencies—the Social Security Act of 1935 provided for Federal-State programs designed to increase resources and improve methods of assisting persons in these categories. Federal grants to the States were authorized on condition that plans for assistance as submitted by the several States were approved by the Social Security Board.

The ratios set for these grants from Federal funds were as follows: 50 percent of the amount given each aged or blind person by the State or its subdivision, up to a total allowance of \$30 a month; 33⅓ percent of the amount given for each child under 16, up to a total of \$18 for the first child and \$12 for each additional child in the household. Since January 1, 1940, in accordance with amendments of 1939, Federal participation has been more liberal. Reimbursement from Federal funds of 50 percent is now made on State and local payments up to \$40 a month to blind and aged persons, instead of a maximum of \$30 in the original law; reimbursement on payments for dependent children was raised from 33⅓ percent to 50 percent (up to the same maximums as previously) and the age limit for Federal aid was raised to 18 for children regularly attending school.

An acceptable State plan for any of these programs (by the terms of the act) must provide, among other things, that the program shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State; must be administered by, or at least supervised by, a single State agency; must provide for granting to anyone whose claim is denied an opportunity for a fair hearing before the State agency; must not set a residence requirement higher than a specified maximum, nor any citizenship requirement that would exclude any citizen of the United States; must assure financial participation in some degree by the State, as distinguished from its local subdivisions; and must maintain such methods and procedures as the Social Security Board considers necessary for efficient administration, including after January 1, 1940, "methods relating to the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards on a merit basis." By definition, assistance or aid in all three programs means payments in money.

Within this framework, each State is responsible for its own system. It decides whether it wants any of the public-assistance programs and if so which ones. It determines the conditions under which individuals are

eligible for aid and the amount of State funds, or State and local funds, to be used for these purposes. It determines whether applicants are eligible and how much assistance shall be granted in each case. It may make larger grants than the maximum on which Federal reimbursement is given, meeting the excess from its own funds, or it may set limits for maximum grants lower than the maximum on which reimbursement is assured. It may give assistance from its own funds to persons who are less than 65 years old, or for dependent children who are 18 or over, as many States did for children of 16 and 17 before 1940.

Advice and help are given the States by the Social Security Board, but there is no attempt to force upon them a uniform pattern. The Board acts on the principle that progress will be surer and, in the long run, faster if each State builds on its own foundations and according to its own genius, starting with the standards already accepted within its borders and developing in the direction and at the rate that can command the support of public opinion.

By June 1940 approved plans for old-age assistance were in operation in 51 jurisdictions, including all the States; for aid to the blind in 43; and for aid to dependent children in 42. Recipients of the three types of assistance under these approved plans in continental United States and of similar types of assistance in States not participating under the Social Security Act numbered in May 1940: <sup>26</sup>

1,957,000 old persons.

71,000 blind persons, and

822,000 children in 342,000 families.

Old-age assistance and aid to the blind indirectly affect children as well. They relieve the strain in many families in which there are children and release money for their benefit. If the grandfather or grandmother gets an allowance, parents can use their resources for their children without feeling they are neglecting the old folks. In places where there is no aid to dependent children or mothers' aid, and only meager general relief, the old-age grant may be the only income in families with young children.

Variations, inequalities, and inconsistencies are inevitably, at this stage, characteristic of the three public-assistance programs established by the Social Security Act of 1935. In each program there is a wide range of differences among the States and within each State as to average payments to recipients, proportion of recipients to population, and expenditures per inhabitant.

In some States there are great differences in liberality among the three programs. On the whole, the program of aid to dependent children has lagged behind the other two.<sup>27</sup> Although the average grants for the aged and for the blind are nowhere excessive, they are considerably larger than

<sup>26</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 7 (July 1940), p. 55. See subsequent issues for later figures.

<sup>27</sup> "Far behind," says the chairman of the Social Security Board, Arthur J. Altmeyer (*Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 7 [July 1940], pp. 3-15).

the average grants per child for aid to dependent children. About four times as much was spent for old-age assistance in continental United States in the calendar year 1939 as was spent for aid to dependent children. In some of the States participating in the Federal-State program of aid to dependent children the disparity was even greater: Seven times as much was spent for old-age assistance in California and eight times as much in Colorado. In the eight States not participating at that time the disparity was greater than for the country as a whole.<sup>28</sup>

### Aid to Dependent Children

Of the three new public-assistance programs, one obviously is of special importance for children in their own homes. About 350,000 families in the United States in the summer of 1940 were receiving aid from public funds for more than 800,000 children deprived of parental support or care by death, absence, or incapacity.<sup>29</sup> This compares with 117,000 families and 286,000 children shortly before Federal aid became available.<sup>30</sup> It is estimated that the amendments of 1939 will further increase the number of children under this program to 1 million by June 30, 1941, but that the number who should be provided for is nearer 2 million.<sup>31</sup>

The new Federal-State program established by the Social Security Act of 1935 builds on the experience of the mothers' aid laws that had been passed by all but two States between 1911 and 1935, in response to the stimulus given by the White House Conference of 1909 through its enunciation of the principle that children should not be separated from their families because of poverty alone. The philosophy of the Federal act is more liberal than that of most of the antecedent State laws. The act requires that aid shall be available in all parts of the State. It sets a maximum residence requirement.<sup>32</sup> It makes Federal funds available for aid not only to children living with their mothers, but also to children living with any of a number of other relatives. It recognizes as causes of dependency not only the death of the father, but also the death of the mother and the physical or mental incapacity or continued absence from home of either parent.

In its administration of the program the Social Security Board looks toward extension of aid to all children potentially eligible, including those whose "unsuitable" homes can be rehabilitated by financial aid accom-

<sup>28</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (May 1940), p. 37.

<sup>29</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 9 (September 1940), p. 59, and subsequent issues.

<sup>30</sup> Public Aid for the Care of Dependent Children in Their Own Homes, 1932-38, by Dorothy R. Bucklin. *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (April 1939), pp. 24-35.

<sup>31</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 7 (July 1940), p. 12.

<sup>32</sup> "The Board \* \* \* shall not approve any plan which imposes as a condition of eligibility \* \* \* a residence requirement which denies aid with respect to any child residing in the State (1) who has resided in the State for 1 year immediately preceding the application for such aid, or (2) who was born within the State within 1 year immediately preceding the application, if its mother has resided in the State for 1 year immediately preceding the birth."

panied by guidance and other services, and toward development of adequate appropriations and adequate individual grants, of increasingly effective administration and increasingly competent personnel in the States and localities, and of increasing integration of all available services. Its conception of the goal is "a kind of assistance that will enable families now in the dependent class" throughout the Nation "to fulfill their own responsibilities to their children and to society."<sup>33</sup>

Forty-one States, the District of Columbia, and the Territory of Hawaii by the end of 1940 were participating in the Federal program for aid to dependent children. Many States, as a necessary preliminary or a natural concomitant, have liberalized their requirements for eligibility and their scales of allowances. Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, Nevada, Texas, and Alaska had not availed themselves of Federal assistance by the end of 1940.

In the State laws<sup>34</sup> the maximum age for eligibility of children ranges from 16 to 18. About three-fourths of the States specify the causes of need that will be recognized. Nineteen States set limitations either in their laws or in their administrative regulations on the amount of property the applicant may possess. In about a third of the States children who have relatives legally liable and financially able to support them are not eligible. Nearly as many States have provisions relating to personal fitness of the applicants. Most of the States permit application from any near relative, but a few recognize only the mother. About half set maximum allowances. Almost half stipulate that aid must be sufficient to bring up the child in a manner compatible with his health and general welfare. Within the framework of these varying legal provisions there are additional variations in administration, resulting from economic conditions, public attitudes, and ability of personnel.

Average grants per family in May 1940 in the 42 jurisdictions operating under approved State plans ranged from \$8.16 in Arkansas to a little more than \$45 in New York, Rhode Island, and California, and \$57.60 in Massachusetts. Number of recipients (children) per 1,000 estimated population under 16 years of age ranged from 10 in Virginia and Georgia to 55 in Arizona.<sup>35</sup> Within States there are similar variations among cities and counties. In December 1939 average monthly payments in the counties of Ohio ranged from \$13.04 per family to \$63.39; in Indiana, from \$11.48 in one county to \$34.56 in another.<sup>36</sup>

Examination of the outlay for this purpose in its relation to population shows that expenditures in the United States in the calendar year 1939<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Aid to Families With Dependent Children, by Jane M. Hoey. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 202, March 1939, pp. 74-81.

<sup>34</sup> Our Social Geography, by David C. Adie. *Survey* *Midmonthly*, Vol. LXXVI, No. 9 (September 1940), pp. 259-261.

<sup>35</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 7 (July 1940), p. 61.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>37</sup> Based on preliminary figures from the 1940 census of population. Aggregate amounts are given in *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (May 1940), p. 37.



amounted to 87 cents per inhabitant, ranging in the States participating in the Federal program from 12 cents in Virginia and 20 cents in Arkansas to \$2.34 in Utah. In the eight States not participating, expenditures for mothers' aid in the same year ranged from less than 1 cent per inhabitant in Mississippi and in Texas to 48 cents in Connecticut and 59 cents in South Dakota.

In many States the philosophy underlying the new program has not yet been thoroughly assimilated, even though embodied in their laws. It does not yet fully shape the attitudes of appropriating bodies, administrators, and staff members. Some States with a long record of effective administration of "mothers' aid" are slow to adopt the more liberal spirit of "aid to dependent children" because of hampering traditions. There may be very strict construction of the degree of "incapacity" that constitutes eligibility or little consideration of relatives other than the mother, who might serve *in loco parentis* acceptably as well as legally. In some places assistance is denied if the mother, according to local standards or the standards of the investigator, is "not the kind of woman that deserves this kind of assistance." Cases are sometimes closed for similar reasons, without consideration of what will become of the children. That is, aid to dependent children is frequently withheld in censure of disapproved standards of conduct instead of being used, with other services, to transform the unfavorable conditions surrounding the children. There is evidence, however, of a trend toward more liberal judgments and less disposition to penalize children for their parents' nonconformity to accepted social patterns. Among the cases accepted for aid to dependent children in the fiscal year 1938-39, 7 percent were living with unmarried mothers (less than 1 percent in 5 States, but 14 percent in Maryland and 15 percent in New York), whereas 2 years earlier the proportion was only 2 percent. A somewhat similar change has taken place in the attitude toward desertion.<sup>38</sup>

Other practices, related rather to funds and staff, operate to deprive children of the benefits of the program. In many places, decisions on applications are long delayed, and there are long waiting lists. In one State at the end of December 1939, 3,562 families were receiving aid to dependent children, 797 cases had been found eligible but were not receiving payments, and 9,329 applications were pending. The States with such situations are usually, moreover, States that spend little for general relief.<sup>39</sup> In some places aid is denied to mothers with only one dependent child, or to families having legally responsible relatives, regardless of their circumstances. If an applicant is not considered "worthy," in some places she and her children are relegated to seeking such general relief as may be available in the community, and she may not be told of her legal right to aid to dependent children. In some sparsely settled districts

<sup>38</sup> Aid to Dependent Children, by Geoffrey May. *Social Work Year Book, 1941*, pp. 49-57.

<sup>39</sup> Information from the Bureau of Public Assistance, Social Security Board.

people have to travel 50 miles or more to make an application. When they get there they may find the office closed for the day. Some sections of the population have only a vague idea, or none at all, about the assistance that is available and the terms of eligibility for it. In a few States there is a gap between the age at which aid to dependent children stops and the age at which aid to the blind begins or the age at which employment is allowed.<sup>40</sup>

Grants in a large proportion of cases are far from adequate to permit a normal standard of living for the children. This can be said with assurance, even though the amount of the grant does not in all cases represent the entire income of the family. An average grant per family as low as \$8 or \$10 a month, which allows only a few cents a day per child and nothing for the rest of the family, cannot be "adequate" in any of the States.

In many States the amount of assistance needed is determined by subtracting the income of the family from the estimated family budget for the month, to arrive at a "budget deficit." But if funds are low or if the State law limits in any way the amount that may be given, this calculation does not determine the amount of the grant. When it is merely a matter of making the money "go around," the budget deficit frequently is reduced arbitrarily. Where statutes limit the amount that may be granted or where administrative policy treats the maximum Federal contribution as determining the maximum grant, the amount of the grant may be arrived at by the illogical procedure of subtracting the family income from that maximum, instead of from the total amount estimated as required for the budget. Some communities, furthermore, still distrust cash payments, but the State's anxiety to meet the conditions for Federal grants is operating to overcome their reluctance to provide cash payments.

There is ample evidence that the maximums governing Federal contributions for aid to dependent children are too low, and that they tend to scale down grants in a number of States that have no legal limitations of their own.<sup>41</sup> There are few places in the United States, if any, where an adult and one child can live decently on \$18 a month, an adult and two children on \$30. The \$6 difference between \$18 for one child and \$12 for each additional child cannot be regarded as covering the needs of the mother or other adult. Yet no provision is made for this purpose, and thus the situation arises that the adult guardian of the child may have to live on the child's allowance. It is shown in the study cited that the inadequacy of the Federal maximum is greatest in families with one child, and that it declines with each additional child. The more dependent children

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<sup>40</sup> The Federal act does not set 21 as the minimum age for aid to the blind, but some authorities suggest this administrative interpretation so as to avoid "cradle to grave" public care; this minimum age would leave 3 years, from 18 to 21, unprovided for. This point of view, however, is not that of the Bureau of Public Assistance, which holds that aid to the blind should be available wherever needed.

<sup>41</sup> The Influence of Federal and State Maximums on Grants Approved for Aid to Dependent Children in 1937-38, by John M. Lynch. *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 8 (August 1939), pp. 7-14.

there are in a family, evidently, the more nearly they can support their mother on allowances within the scale set for Federal participation. The reasonable way out, and one in harmony with the philosophy that underlies the rest of the program of public assistance under the Social Security Act, would seem to be to grant a maximum of \$40 for the first child rather than \$18.

Inadequate grants to families are probably due less to stinginess and indifference than to the genuine financial difficulty of many States and localities in providing necessary appropriations. The Social Security Board has recommended to the President and the Congress (January 1939) that the maximum limitations on contributions for aid to dependent children be raised; also that the present system of uniform percentage grants for all three public-assistance programs be changed to a system of variable grants adjusted to the economic capacity of the State, with the suggestion that an interdepartmental agency be established and charged with the responsibility for determining the relative economic capacity of the various States.<sup>42</sup>

State methods of financing this program vary. Twelve States rely entirely on special taxes, characterized by fluctuating returns. Some States allocate their relief funds among the assistance programs arbitrarily according to fixed percentages. Colorado, for example, assigns 50 percent of the total to old-age assistance, 5 percent to aid to dependent children. Relations between the States and their local subdivisions vary also. In 16 of the 42 jurisdictions with approved plans in 1939 the entire amount of aid to dependent children was paid from State and Federal funds; in the other 26 part was paid from local funds, ranging from six-tenths of 1 percent in Michigan to 49.7 percent in New York. Many of the States are recognizing the unequal ability of their subdivisions to carry their share of the costs under existing State laws and are adopting measures that tend towards distributing costs throughout the State in relation to local conditions. A number of them have "equalization funds," but some of these serve only to obviate extreme local break-downs that would prevent the State from meeting the Federal requirement that its plan must be in operation in every political subdivision of the State. To meet equitably the varying degrees of need in different parts of the State it has been suggested that the Federal law be amended to stipulate either that the State shall not require financial participation of its subdivisions or that every State that does so shall provide an effective equalization fund.<sup>43</sup>

There are many places in the country in which personnel for this program is not adapted to carry it on in the spirit of the law. Minimum standards

<sup>42</sup> See Formula for Variable Federal Grants-in-Aid, by Daniel S. Gerig, Jr. (*Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 6 [June 1940], pp. 3-14).

<sup>43</sup> Social Security in Relation to Agriculture and Rural Areas, by A. J. Altmeyer. *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 7 (July 1940), pp. 3-15 and table, p. 49. Aid to Dependent Children, by Geoffrey May. *Social Work Year Book, 1941*, pp. 49-57.

of education and experience in some cases are so low as to be meaningless. Appointments sometimes have been made on other bases than ability to perform the duties of the positions. A large turn-over of staff sometimes has followed elections. A staff inadequate in number and not properly qualified for the work almost inevitably results in concentration on "eligibility," and little attention is given to need for supplementary services.

Although the Social Security Board has been charged from the beginning with the duty of seeing that State plans operated efficiently, the original act did not give it authority to set standards for personnel. That handicap was removed by the amendments of 1939 which required the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards on a merit basis in State social-security agencies beginning January 1, 1940.<sup>44</sup> From the beginning, however, the Board has tried to convince the States of the desirability of recruiting, appointing, and retaining the best-qualified persons available for each type of position through a merit system; and has urged them to promote the development of the fullest capacities of each employee through skillful supervision, opportunities for general and technical education, and special programs adapted to local needs.

Since the beginning of the Federal-State program of aid to dependent children the number of children provided for in their own homes by public funds has increased almost threefold. Coverage also has been extended. There are still many children, however, dependent according to the Federal definition, who are not receiving the benefits of Federal aid. At the end of 1940, 7 States and Alaska were not yet participating in the program. In other States many children eligible for aid to dependent children were not receiving it because of inadequate appropriations or incomplete acceptance of the philosophy of the program.

This program has developed less rapidly than the other Federal-State programs of public assistance, partly because of greater organized pressure on behalf of the aged and of the blind and partly because of the less favorable terms on which Federal aid has been given for this program. Its present status varies widely throughout the country. By whatever methods can be devised, it should be extended to reach every child in the country who needs what it can supply; and it should be liberalized, particularly in respect to a provision for the mother or other guardian of the child, perhaps by the inclusion of a provision for a larger maximum allowance for the first child.

It is generally recognized that, in the main, grants are not large enough to meet needs. Sometimes they are supplemented from other funds to give the family the income required to maintain a good home for the children. Sometimes they are not supplemented. Inadequacy of grants is ascribed to the influence of the maximums governing Federal contribu-

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<sup>44</sup> Developments to July 1, 1940, under this amendment are reviewed in *Six Months of State Merit System Progress*, by Albert H. Aronson (*Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 7 [Jul., 1940], p. 25).

tion; to limitations in State laws; and to insufficient appropriations by State and local governments, resulting not only from imperfect appreciation of the need but probably more from financial difficulties. If the children of the country are to have what the program contemplates, these obstacles must be overcome by whatever methods may be necessary, until every grant is "adequate."

## General Relief

In the year ending June 1940 there were on the average each month nearly 2 million children under 16 years of age in families receiving general relief.<sup>45</sup> That was two and a half times as many as the average receiving aid to dependent children. A comparison of the total number of children in these two categories in the course of the year would show a greater difference, since the turn-over in families receiving general relief is faster.

General relief as such gets no help from Federal funds at the present time, although it did from 1932 to the end of 1935, except for the few months during which the Civil Works Administration was active. The average amount received per family receiving general relief in May 1940 was \$24.64, and the average amount of aid to dependent children in the same month in the States with approved plans was \$32.19 per family. By States the averages for general relief (all of it from State or local public sources) ranged from \$4.91 in Arkansas to \$34.77 in New York (\$38.34 in New York City).<sup>46</sup> Expressed in amounts spent per inhabitant, the range in the calendar year 1939 was from \$9.10 in New York and \$9.43 in Pennsylvania down to 2 cents in Mississippi.<sup>47</sup>

General relief, in theory, is a safety net spread to catch all in need who are not provided for by special kinds of assistance. Its volume tends to fluctuate with changes in other programs and with the mood of legislatures, as well as with fluctuations in the amount of need. It is depended upon to supplement inadequate W. P. A. earnings, public-assistance grants, and unemployment-compensation benefits when these are not adequate for family needs; and to provide for persons awaiting assignment on W. P. A. or acceptance for the special types of assistance, for persons laid off by W. P. A. because of contraction in program or changes of policy, for persons whose unemployment-compensation benefits come to an end before they get work. It is the only public source of assistance for persons who cannot qualify for W. P. A. or for the special types of assistance or who cannot "get on" them because appropriations are not large enough to cover all who can qualify.

That describes its functions on paper, as an element in our present blue-

<sup>45</sup> Estimated from number of cases receiving general relief, as reported monthly in the *Social Security Bulletin*.

<sup>46</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 7 (July 1940), pp. 57, 61, 70.

<sup>47</sup> Based on preliminary figures from the 1940 census of population. Aggregate amounts are given in *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (May 1940), p. 37.

print of a national system of public assistance. There are places in the United States where it discharges these functions quite as well as any of the other elements in the program discharge their functions. But these places are few. There are far more where it is negligible as a resource.

Three-fourths of the States had State-financed or State-aided programs of general assistance at the end of 1940. State funds supplied 50 percent of the expenditures in continental United States for general relief under local authorities in the calendar year 1939, in proportions ranging from 3 percent in Nevada, 10 percent in Wisconsin, 11 percent in Maryland, up to 100 percent in Arizona, Arkansas, and Pennsylvania.<sup>48</sup> Seven of the twelve States in which general relief was financed entirely by the localities in 1939 spent very little for the purpose in comparison with population.<sup>49</sup> Most of these 12 States are generally regarded as too poor to raise by taxation the amounts needed for public assistance and other purposes. Some of them may not be considered to be making the wisest use of their resources.

Four-fifths of the money spent for general relief in 1939 was spent in 8 States, which have less than half of the total population.<sup>50</sup> In many areas only "pauper" relief is available, granted at the discretion of "poor law" officials from meager local funds. These in general are the areas where private agencies are scarce and small or nonexistent, where the public-assistance programs are relatively backward, and where the income of the population from normal sources is relatively small.

In some places,<sup>51</sup> assistance is refused (except for brief periods of severe illness or other extreme emergency) to a family in which there is an employable person or one who is presumptively eligible for old-age assistance, aid to the blind, or aid to dependent children. In some places relief is denied to aliens, who by Federal law are debarred from W. P. A. In other places, no aid at all is given to nonresidents,<sup>52</sup> and they are told to move on. In other places no help is given to homeless persons, or to persons who have not established a "settlement"<sup>53</sup> in the locality. Occasionally help may be given to transients in desperate need, but only temporarily. In some places relief is limited, even for residents, to tem-

<sup>48</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 8 (August 1940), pp. 39-40.

<sup>49</sup> In these 7 States—Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas—the expenditure per inhabitant ranged from 2 cents in Mississippi to 37 cents in Florida; of the other 5 States—Indiana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, South Dakota, and Vermont—only 1 State—New Hampshire—spent a larger amount per inhabitant than the average for the country. (Based on figures from table 1, p. 403, *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 8 [August 1940] and preliminary figures from 1940 census of population.)

<sup>50</sup> The 8 States were New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, California, Massachusetts, Ohio, New Jersey, and Michigan, listed in order of amount spent (*Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 5, [May 1940], p. 37).

<sup>51</sup> For additional data see *General Relief*, a pamphlet issued by the American Public Welfare Association (Chicago, May 1939), and *Some Aspects of the Relief Situation in Representative Areas of the United States*, a summary prepared by the American Association of Social Workers (New York, May 1939).

<sup>52</sup> Hardships caused by this policy are greatly aggravated when there is increased migration of families, as in 1941, as the result of the development of defense industries and the establishment of new army camps and naval bases.

<sup>53</sup> No States have identical settlement laws and only 4 provide that settlement once acquired is retained until a new settlement is established elsewhere. Within a State there may be variations in the requirements of its subdivisions.

porary assistance in case of urgent need. In a few States, by way of contrast, all persons who are in need and are unable to provide for themselves, regardless of residence or settlement, are eligible for general relief.

Policies and practice as to the amount of relief given to a family are determined largely by the amount of money on hand and by local public opinion. In some places the amount of money available is divided by the total number of persons on relief and that figure is multiplied by the number of persons in the family to arrive at the amount to be given each family. In others, assistance from general relief funds is as nearly adequate as aid to dependent children—which may or may not be fairly adequate. In one or two cities it comes fairly close to meeting real needs. But they are outstanding exceptions.

In many communities where, theoretically, grants are determined on the basis of "budgetary deficiency," some of the essential items—rent frequently, clothing generally, recreation and other "frills" almost always—are omitted in calculating needs; and if the total deficit comes out higher than the allowable maximum or higher than the treasury can afford it is slashed arbitrarily or only a percentage of it is allowed.<sup>54</sup> Application of a uniform percentage to all the budgetary deficits as calculated (85 percent, 75 percent, even 50 percent) has a specious appearance of equity and of scientific method, but it penalizes the families with the smaller budgetary deficits. And to a family that needs \$30 and gets only \$20 it makes no difference whether the \$20 resulted from a flat cut of \$10 or from taking 66⅔ percent of the budgetary deficit.

Orders or commodities rather than money are still common as the form in which general relief is given. Federal surplus commodities are depended upon to supplement it. These surplus commodities were intended by the Federal Government to be *surplus relief*—a sort of bonus above what is needed for decent subsistence—and the States have been enjoined repeatedly not to use them to eke out inadequate allowances. Nevertheless, in large sections of the country they are counted on by the relief authorities to supplement grants, *and in many places they are the only assistance given to large numbers of families*. This is true even under the food-stamp plan now in operation in a number of cities.

The food-stamp plan, administered by the Surplus Marketing Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture, is an improved method of distributing surplus food to families on relief, whereby commodities are handled through retail food stores. In places participating in the plan, families on the relief rolls receive orange-colored stamps (instead of cash or grocery orders) in an amount equivalent to their food allowance and, in addition, blue stamps worth half as much. The stamps are accepted in payment for food at any retail store cooperating with the

<sup>54</sup> See *Some Aspects of the Relief Situation in Representative Areas of the United States*.

welfare department and are redeemable by the wholesale and retail dealers at local banks. With the orange stamps any kind of food may be bought; with the blue stamps, only such articles as are declared by the Secretary of Agriculture from time to time to be "surplus."<sup>55</sup>

This plan was first introduced in Rochester, N. Y., in May 1939. By the end of June 1940, it was operating in 83 areas, and almost 1.5 million persons were participating. Federal expenditures for surplus-food stamps presented for payment through June 1940, were \$16.6 million.<sup>56</sup>

In general the food-stamp plan has been popular, although it "labels" the recipients and is open to abuse by grocers. Notwithstanding the guarantee required by the Surplus Marketing Administration that the blue stamps will not be used as a substitute for existing relief, local authorities have found ways to evade it. In some places food allowances have actually been reduced following its introduction.<sup>57</sup>

About one-fourth of the families receiving economic assistance in the United States are dependent on general relief. In a few States administration and financial support of general relief have been improved since 1930 to such a degree that they may now be described as good. In most of the country, however, general relief is insufficient in amount, unsuitable in kind, and so administered as to increase dependency rather than to hasten a return to self-support.

Explanations for the prevailing low standards lie in part in the financial difficulties of State and local governments and in the absence of Federal aid such as is available for the special types of public assistance. Among other explanations are frequent changes in the Federal work program and its failure to provide at any time for all the so-called employables; delays on the part of States and local units in replacing antiquated administrative machinery, points of view, and emergency methods by a modernized system adapted to present needs; imperfect appreciation of the qualities needed in persons who administer relief; the inadequate supply of qualified persons; and, above all, public indifference.

Standards both in amount of assistance and in quality of administration are generally lower in States where the full cost must be met by the local community; and on the whole, State programs of general relief, by contrast with the Federally aided public-assistance programs, present a jerky series of adjustments and temporizings rather than steady progress in an orderly development. "It seems clear," says the director of the American Public Welfare Association,<sup>58</sup> "that the combined resources and capacities

<sup>55</sup> Surplus foods are used to benefit children also through school lunches. During March 1940—the peak month of the school year 1939–40—about 3 million children in 43,000 schools were daily eating lunches supplied at least in part from surplus foods.

<sup>56</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 9 (September 1940), pp. 55–56.

<sup>57</sup> Public Welfare, by Fred K. Hoehler. *Social Work Year Book*, 1941, pp. 443–455.

<sup>58</sup> Fred K. Hoehler in the article on Public Welfare (*Social Work Year Book*, 1941, pp. 443–445).



of Federal, State, and local governments must be applied and correlated in a continuing program of general relief."

### Special Assistance to Farm Families

Loans and grants administered by the Farm Security Administration are in effect a substitute for general relief in many rural areas, but they are financed entirely by Federal funds. They are also a substitute for employment on W. P. A., which is not well adapted to the needs of farmers in many States.

This program too was begun in the late summer of 1935. By the end of 1939 grants had been made to 520,000 families for short periods of time. They are auxiliary to the loans and supervision of the rural-rehabilitation program and are intended to provide for temporary emergencies—in many cases for a few winter months. The number of families aided in March, the heaviest month each year, has been two, three, four, even six times the number in the following July or August. Grants are figured to supply minimum current needs but not to replace clothing or household furnishings. They have averaged around \$18 or \$20 a month.

In March 1940 grants were certified for 119,000 families,<sup>59</sup> including perhaps 275,000 children under 16. That was more than a third as many as were receiving aid to dependent children. The 119,000 families were scattered through all the States, ranging from 5 families in Connecticut to 16,537 in Florida. Two-thirds of them lived in 9 States.<sup>60</sup>

Some of these grants have gone to migrant families in California, Arizona, and elsewhere, to whom food, tents, and blankets also were issued. The numbers of families in Arizona and California for whom subsistence payments were certified in March 1940 were respectively 5,920 and 13,468.

A large number of farm families with low incomes receive small loans through the rural-rehabilitation program of the Farm Security Administration. These loans are administered in connection with a basic educational program directed toward increased efficiency in farm and home management, dietary improvement, and child welfare. It is estimated that the rural-rehabilitation program reaches little more than half the families who are eligible for its loans.

<sup>59</sup> *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 6 (June 1940), p. 55.

<sup>60</sup> Florida, California, South Dakota, Georgia, Arizona, Alabama, Nebraska, Kansas, Montana, listed in order of number of grants. In the preceding year (March 1939) the range was from 2 families in Nevada to 27,247 in North Dakota.

## Summary of Present Provisions

Children under 16 years of age in the United States whose families are receiving economic assistance as of 1940 were distributed somewhat as follows among the principal types of assistance:

Type of assistance	Number of children under 16 <sup>1</sup>	
	January 1940	June 1940
Work Projects Administration wages.....	3, 300, 000	2, 600, 000
General relief, State and local.....	2, 100, 000	1, 700, 000
Aid to dependent children.....	783, 000	831, 000
Farm Security Administration grants.....	250, 000	140, 000

<sup>1</sup> Estimated, except for aid to dependent children, from number of cases shown in *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 8 (August 1940), table 3, p. 43.

There are many children in families receiving grants for the aged and the blind, but it is not possible to estimate their number, nor to what extent they share in such grants. There are also children who benefit in some degree, directly or indirectly, from the cash allowances and the maintenance provided for young men in the Civilian Conservation Corps and from the assistance given by the programs of the National Youth Administration, but how many and to what extent cannot be determined. There are others in families getting surplus commodities, but no other aid, although they may need other kinds and larger amounts. In addition to these children in families receiving public assistance of one kind or another or wages from Federal work programs, there is an indeterminable but relatively small number in families under the care of private agencies.

Among the families of these 5 to 6 million children receiving economic assistance from one source or several sources there is every gradation in need and every gradation in adequacy of assistance. Large as this total is, outside of it are still an unknown number of children whose families need assistance but get none of any kind, nor in any amount.

Obviously, children whose families need economic assistance do not fare alike. Nor is the assistance they get determined basically by what is best for them, but by accidents of residence, family composition, and changes in public policy. The number receiving aid to dependent children tends to increase steadily. The number supported wholly or partly by W. P. A. wages varies with changes in the scope of the program and local administration that have little reference to the need for economic assistance in the locality. The number dependent on general relief tends to follow fluctuations in the W. P. A. program and in the labor market. The number who have to get along without any help is determined largely by the amount of

money available for general relief, the conditions required for eligibility, and the methods of administration, all of which in turn depend basically on public opinion. Under present conditions there are grades and castes in the economic assistance provided that are not related to grades and varieties of need.

In a hypothetical case children may have a father who in the winter of 1938-39 was lucky enough to have work on W. P. A. at a "security wage" and a mother who was a good enough manager to make that wage "do." The father may have been laid off in June when the W. P. A. program was cut by a third, and may have been unable to find work. He may live in a place where no public relief is given to families with an employable member and where there are no private agencies. His church may have no means of helping. His relatives may be as "hard up" as he is. After a time he may decide that his family would be better off without him. Suppose he eliminates himself. It may be months before aid to dependent children can be obtained and then it may not be enough to meet the needs of the whole family.

Or suppose he lives in a place where general relief is available, even to families with an able-bodied man, and he stays with his family. According to where they live, they may get grocery orders, \$5 or \$10 occasionally, or a small monthly allowance sufficient to buy enough food to keep them alive and possibly to pay rent in the poorest quarters; or they may get a regular allowance calculated to meet the cost of all the essentials of normal living and supplemented by medical care and sympathetic consideration of other than economic needs.

Or suppose he hears there is a chance of work in some other town, and he decides to take his family and go after it. If he is disappointed, as he is likely to be, the probability is that they are now worse off than ever—uprooted from their old home, with no claim on any organization or unit of government, and on the way to becoming a tragic migrant family.

## A National Program of Economic Assistance

The greatest need of the children of America in 1940 was work for the 9 million or 10 million unemployed adults—"real work at real wages," whether in private employment or on a Federal work program—and a prospect that there will be work for the children themselves as they reach working age. The number of children in need of economic assistance will be reduced as ways are found to increase the productive capacity of the Nation and to bring about a better distribution of income, and as social insurance is developed further. The continuing dependence of large numbers of the people of the United States would be intolerable.

For the children whose families cannot provide for them by earnings, whether these families are many or few, experience has demonstrated that

there must be a Nation-wide comprehensive system of economic assistance, adjustable to changing economic conditions. In the decade since 1930 foundations have been laid for such a system, including social insurance, Federal work programs, Federal grants-in-aid to the States for three categories of needy persons, and direct Federal assistance for farm families. There are still big gaps and serious inadequacies. If, however, we build on these foundations, modifying and extending present provisions as experience points the way, adding the features that are lacking, thoroughly articulating all the parts with one another, we can have by 1950 a system that will assure suitable provision for all the children in the country whose families need economic assistance.

In 1940 the weakest spots—from the point of view of the children—were the failure of the Federal work programs to employ all the employables in need; the inadequate provision of other kinds of assistance for the children of employables who cannot get employment on Federal work programs, particularly the children of aliens; the relatively slow development of the program of aid to dependent children as compared with the programs for the blind and for the aged; the lack of adequate general assistance for that part of the population who need assistance but are not eligible for or are not cared for by any of the special programs, particularly families who live in rural areas and families who cannot meet the residence requirements in the places where they live.

The first essential in rounding out a satisfactory system is adoption by the Federal Government of a stabilized policy of flexible work programs for the unemployed, to be carried on in cooperation with State and local governments but operated and primarily financed by the Federal Government. These programs, the foundation of the whole structure, should provide work, as nearly as is possible, for all the needy unemployed who are employable, and the work should be distributed among the States in proportion to the number of such persons in their population. To end the discrimination that operates against the American children of aliens, it will be necessary to abolish the requirement (imposed in 1939) of citizenship to establish eligibility for employment on W. P. A. For families on farms where W. P. A. work is not feasible or advisable, extension of the rural-rehabilitation program of the Farm Security Administration is desirable.

Our national program of public assistance for families whose needs cannot be met by work has been started on a pattern of categories. Five years have demonstrated that the program of aid to dependent children has lagged behind the other two special types of assistance programs, although neither aid to the blind nor aid to the aged has on the whole been excessive; also that preoccupation with the needs of the persons in these three categories has tended to distract attention from the needs of persons

outside the categories, and to delay or hamper in most States the development of a comprehensive program of public assistance.

Many children are in families not eligible for aid to dependent children and many of these live in places that make the most rudimentary provision for general relief. Many who are eligible receive inadequate grants, or instead of receiving this special type of assistance they receive meager general relief because it is cheaper for the local community or is regarded by local sentiment as more suitable. Development of the program of aid to dependent children to its full possibilities requires revision of the rates of Federal contributions to the States; removal of differentials among the three programs; removal from State and Federal laws of rigid limitations on the amount of grants to children or to families; appropriation by local, State, and Federal governments of the necessary funds; and equitable adjustment of Federal aid among the States and of State aid among the subdivisions, according to economic capacities and needs.

As the public-assistance programs based on three categories of needy persons are now a part of the national fabric and have strong advocates, the most practicable way to supply the missing parts of the system would seem to be to supplement them. Some would do this by adding programs for other categories of needy persons, so that every variety of need would be covered by a special provision. A simpler way, which has impressive and steadily increasing support,<sup>61</sup> would be to add a program of general assistance aided by Federal grants, to cover all persons in need who are not in the three categories now the objects of special Federal concern.

Establishment of a program of Federal grants-in-aid to the States for general assistance to all needy persons not otherwise provided for would tend to raise the level of general relief for residents, both in character and in coverage, and to standardize it throughout the country at a higher level. It would also ensure relief to transients and migrants, provided the basic law stipulated that an acceptable State plan must not impose any residence requirement as a condition of eligibility. At a single stroke it would make unnecessary further attempts to nullify the hardships arising from settlement laws by securing uniformity in their provisions or by establishing a network of interstate agreements or by reviving some kind of Federal program for transients.

Such a program seems to be the most hopeful proposal that has been made to solve the problem of relief for persons without a "settlement" in the place where they are at the time they need relief. Their number, even in places where they are taken care of with some approach to adequacy, is small compared with the number of "settled" residents on the relief rolls. Federal help in carrying the large load of relief for settled persons would be a generous return to the States, and, through the States,

<sup>61</sup> The Social Security Board, the American Public Welfare Association, and the Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities have supported the establishment of such a program.

to their local subdivisions for their assumption of responsibility for all needy persons regardless of settlement or residence.<sup>62</sup> If the Federal help under such a program should prove to be insufficient, the number of persons within a State who have been there less than 1 year might be taken into consideration in determining the amount of the Federal grant.

Standards of assistance—economic and other kinds—are conditioned not only by the legal framework under which it is given and by appropriations for relief, but also by administrative organization and personnel. The future of millions of the children now living in America will be affected by the ability and the attitude of the persons in State and local agencies who administer these programs of public assistance—especially by those who go into the homes of the children. Great progress has been made in respect to these matters in the brief time during which the Federal programs have been in existence.

Beginning in 1933 with only a small group of workers who had training and experience in the administration of public welfare or of private social service, the Federal agencies administering relief and related programs have developed leadership, recruited and trained staff, and assisted the State agencies in organizing and staffing State and local public-welfare services involving the welfare of millions of people. Notwithstanding the variety of programs involved, with their independent authorizations and eligibility requirements and separate appropriations, coordination and even unified administration have been achieved in considerable degree, particularly in local governments. Marked progress has been made also in developing good working relationships in the exercise of joint responsibilities by the Federal Government, the States, and local units. Introduction of merit systems of personnel administration in State and local agencies administering Federally aided services under the Social Security Act, as now required by law, should assure continuity and competence in carrying out these measures which are so important to the common welfare.

In building upon these foundations, the following aspects of administration require special attention:

- (1) Improvement in the quality of personnel, especially the workers who come into direct contact with the beneficiaries of the various measures. This will require in many areas higher standards for entrance into the service, higher compensation—commensurate with the training and experience required—and expanded programs of professional education and in-service training.

- (2) Recognition of the distinction between costs of administration and cost of services. The costs of services necessary to assist persons in receipt of relief to meet special problems of physical and mental health, vocational adjustment, and family or community relation-

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<sup>62</sup> Relief for Transients, by Philip E. Ryan. *Survey Midmonthly*, Vol. LXXVI, No. 9 (September 1940), pp. 251-253.

ships should not be confused with the costs of determining eligibility and of dispensing assistance, and should be provided for in all plans for financing relief administration by the Federal Government, the States, and the local communities.

(3) Correlation of relief programs with community services for housing, nutrition, medical care, guidance in securing employment, and public recreation. These services should be strengthened so that they may serve more adequately the needs of all low-income groups, not only the beneficiaries of relief programs.

(4) Further progress in the coordination of the relief and social-service programs of the Federal Government, the States, and local communities. Some degree of overlapping is inherent in a program of diversified services, specialized in character and stemming from three levels of government, but, if enough thought and determination are applied to the problem, the elements may be fitted together to form a comprehensive well-conducted whole.

To realize a national program from so many elements will require a long process of welding. Great progress has been made already, when consideration is given to the brief period that the process has been going on and the complexity of the new problems presenting themselves. It is highly important that provision be made for continuing impartial study of the problems of economic need and the operation of programs of economic assistance and for periodic reexamination of the entire system in the light of changing conditions. This is especially important now, when the building of a Nation-wide system is still in its early stages, for its operation will have far-reaching consequences on national life.





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**PART III**  
**SERVICES**

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## Chapter VIII

### Education: The Schools—Religion

#### General Perspectives

SINCE all life is education, it is admittedly arbitrary to single out any part of it as exclusively representing education. In this report four subjects have been given a special designation as coming under this head: The schools, religion, leisure-time activities, and libraries. This is done for practical purposes only and should in no way be deemed to minimize the educational functions of the home, of work, of community life, or of the emotional experiences that arise from the contact of individuals with one another. Technical problems of organization and finance make it convenient, and planning for the future makes it necessary, to consider in some detail how the child in a democracy might expect to be served by the school system, by religious training, by leisure-time services, and by free libraries. These four educational instrumentalities, unlike the home and community life, for example, possess a certain formal structure and content, which are more pronounced in academic training and in religious training than in recreation or in reading. All four are operated by organized bodies: The school, the church, a variety of other voluntary agencies, and governmental bodies—local, State, and Federal. All four use modern methods to extend their services and influence—the screen, radio, dramatics, and visual information.

There is a degree of kinship or similarity of substance in these four educational instrumentalities; much that may be said of one will apply also to the others. In part this kinship or similarity carries over into organized sponsorship as well. Schools may, and many do, carry on religious instruction, recreational activities, and library services. Many churches, especially the Catholic, conduct complete scholastic programs. An increasing number of churches and affiliated religious organizations conduct large programs of recreation.

The avowed purpose of our social and political system is that all education, formal and informal, shall propagate the gospel of democracy and afford practice in the exercise of it. In discussing the problems faced in providing schools for some 30 million children a year in this country this democratic goal will be seen as giving perspective and unity to details, both technical and organizational. The educators who participated in the preparation

of this report defined the ends sought in the education of American children as constituting "*part of the framework of democracy—a society dedicated to equality among men with regard to their liberties, obligations, and opportunities.*" Those members of the Conference whose special province it was to formulate the functions of religious training similarly emphasized the democratic motif:

*It is within this tradition that American democracy guarantees religious freedom to every man to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. In American democracy any and every religious group has an untrammelled right to hold, practice, and teach its particular beliefs. This is a democratic achievement infinitely precious and one that we should safeguard at any cost.*

*Moreover, there are contributions of great importance that a free religion makes to democracy. It is clear that the demands of democracy upon character are greater than those in any other form of social organization \* \* \*.*

No less clear-cut was the definition of the fundamental meaning of democracy for leisure-time services:

*Recreation for children in a democracy should reflect in its program, organization, and operations those values which are implicit in the democratic way of life. This means, among other things, a program that emerges from the life of the people; a leadership that represents and releases the deepest needs and interests of persons; a relationship with people in the community that involves them in responsible participation, both in planning and in management; a form of administration that is democratic, not autocratic; a method that utilizes group experience and group channels in the total process.*

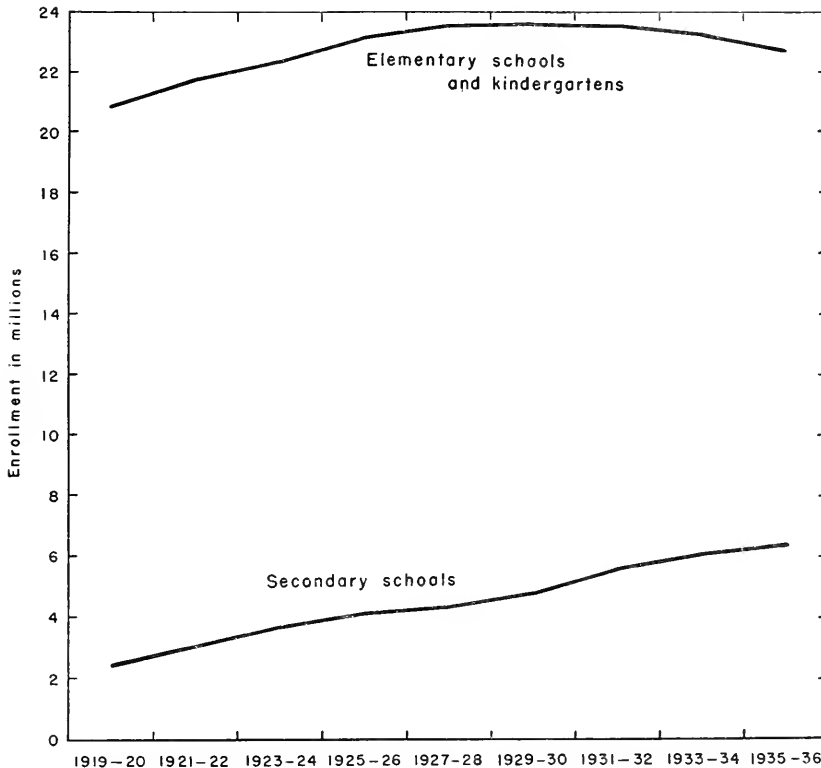
Whether in connection with the philosophical aspects of education, or its technical principles, or the questions of finance and organization, the chief test of their acceptability to this Conference has been that of conformity with the democratic pattern and motivation. For this pattern comprises both goal and path, both ideal and technique; it applies to the qualities sought in the child and to the manner in which the adult world molds itself into the educational pattern for the child.

In the present chapter attention is given to two parts of the educational program: To the school as an institutional vehicle for scholastic education and to religious training as a noninstitutional aspect of education. The school as dealt with here is primarily a public agency, tax supported, oriented to the general population; the church is not a governmental agency, it is not supported by tax funds, it varies in tenet and premises with the diverse denominations, but it is regarded as an educational instrument insofar as it provides religious training to children.

## Education Through the School

About 30 million children 5 to 17 years of age are being served by elementary and secondary schools—public and private—in the United States. The number has been steadily growing and is likely to reach a peak in the near future. A slow decline—a very slow one—may then set in, but no decrease substantial enough to lighten the total school burden may be looked for in the coming decade. For, although the elementary-school

Chart 25.—Enrollment in elementary and secondary schools; United States, 1920-36<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Includes public and private schools. Based on data from *Biennial Survey of Education* (U. S. Office of Education).

population has already declined, secondary schools have more than taken up the slack (chart 25). Between 1930 and 1936 elementary-school enrollments decreased by 880,000, but an increase of 1,625,000 in high-school enrollments brought a net increase to the schools of 743,000 children.<sup>1</sup>

An ever greater proportion of children entering the elementary schools continue into high school. During this same period—1930 to 1936—for

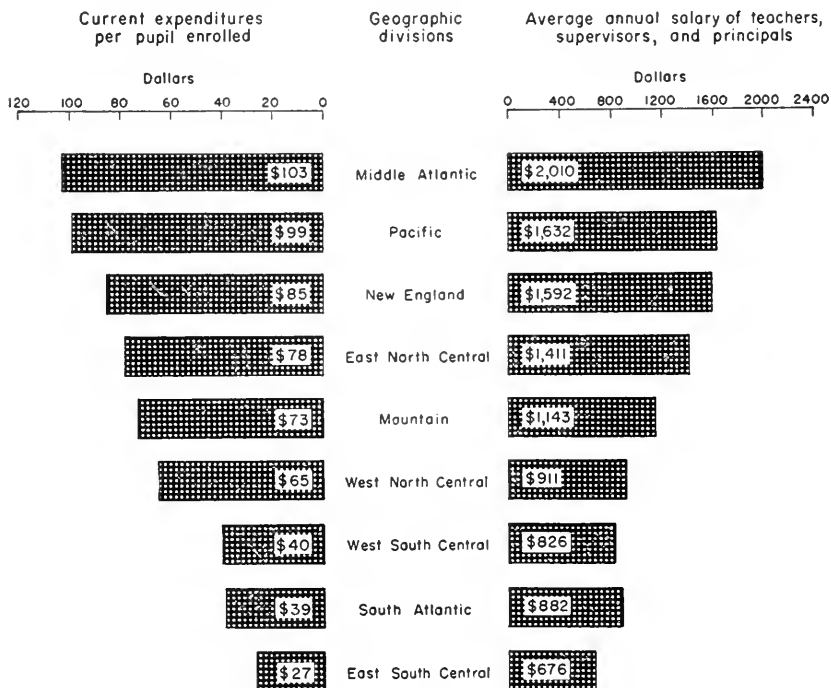
<sup>1</sup> *Statistical Summary of Education, 1935-36*, p. 7. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1937, No. 2. Washington, 1939.

the public schools the proportion of children who reached the last year of high school increased from 17 percent of those entering the first grade to 30 percent. The average attendance during the same period rose by 3 days per pupil per year.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, despite Nation-wide retrenchment during the depression, the decade just closed has witnessed the addition of vocational-education, homemaking, and citizenship courses in many schools, as well as considerable health supervision, vocational guidance, library facilities, and other school services. Any appreciable reduction in the size of the school problem on its quantitative side is only a distant possibility.

### *Educational Inequalities and Economic Resources.*

This picture of expanding school services, as indicated by both the number of pupils and the enrichment of the curriculum, is incomplete, however, and in part misleading. As one of the foundation stones of democracy

**Chart 26.—Current expenditures per pupil enrolled and average annual salary of teachers, supervisors, and principals in public schools, by geographic divisions; United States, 1936<sup>1</sup>**



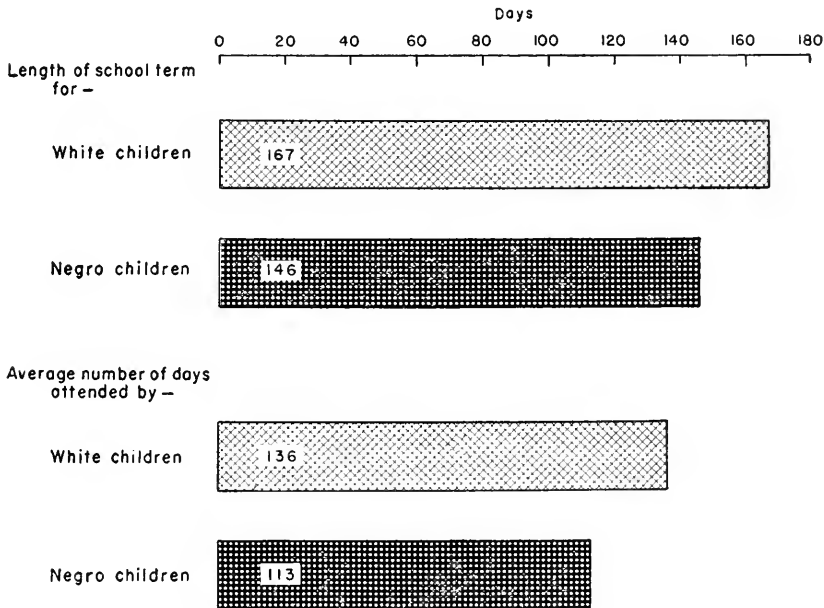
<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1939* (U. S. Bureau of the Census).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 17.

educational opportunity is assumed to be open to all children, and access to schools, both elementary and secondary, is regarded as a birthright of the American child. The facts, however, do not support this assumption of equal educational opportunity for all children. Whole regions, many States, and large areas within States are inadequately supplied with school facilities, in quantity, quality, and accessibility. This is due principally to differences in economic capacity in different parts of the country, (chart 26).

The inequalities in school resources affect most adversely families living on farms and in small rural communities. The farming areas within the States and the farming States, as compared with industrial States, have the most children, the least adequate school systems, the smallest amounts of money available for schools. Children in minority groups, particularly Negro children, (chart 27), fail to obtain a proportionate share of the educational opportunities available.

Chart 27.—Length of school term and average number of days attended by each pupil in schools for white and Negro children in 18 States; United States, 1935-36<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Biennial Survey of Education, 1935-36* (U. S. Office of Education).

Farm families average about twice as many children in proportion to women of childbearing age as urban families.<sup>3</sup> Family incomes in predominantly farming regions average far below those in regions that are

<sup>3</sup> *Population Statistics: National Data*, p. 30. National Resources Committee, Washington, October 1937. The data are for native white; the disproportion is less for the foreign born but even greater for the Negro.

predominantly industrial.<sup>4</sup> The Nation's farmers in general were supporting 31 percent of the Nation's children in 1930 while they were receiving 9 percent of the national income. Regional comparison further emphasizes these inequalities (table 5). In the Southeast, comprising 11 States, the farm population with but 2 percent of the national income in 1930 cared for 13 percent of the children between 5 and 17 years of age.<sup>5</sup>

Table 5.—Percentage distribution of children 5 to 17 years of age and of national income, 1930 <sup>1</sup>

Region	Total		Farm		Nonfarm	
	Children 5-17	Income	Children 5-17	Income	Children 5-17	Income
United States . . . . .	100. 00	100. 00	30. 63	9. 03	69. 37	90. 97
Northeast . . . . .	29. 66	42. 93	2. 70	1. 24	26. 96	41. 69
Middle States . . . . .	26. 06	28. 38	6. 91	2. 11	19. 15	26. 27
Northwest . . . . .	6. 26	4. 59	2. 83	1. 19	3. 43	3. 40
Southeast . . . . .	24. 41	10. 01	13. 42	2. 21	10. 99	7. 80
Southwest . . . . .	8. 13	5. 22	3. 82	1. 15	4. 31	4. 07
Far West . . . . .	5. 48	8. 87	. 95	1. 13	4. 53	7. 74

<sup>1</sup> Compiled from data given in appendix table 15 (pp. 169-171), *Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth*.

Another statistical measure of the smaller income and the larger families of the farm population is the relative income per child in the farm population and the nonfarm population. For every dollar of income per farm child in 1930, there was an income of \$4.44 per nonfarm child. Again the regions vary the story. In the Middle States, for every dollar per farm child the income per nonfarm child was \$4.46; in the Southeast, \$4.33; in the Far West, where the farm child was nearly as well off—by income at least—as the city child, \$1.42. Among the States the income per nonfarm child, in comparison with every dollar of income per farm child, ranged from \$6.10 in Missouri down to \$1.03 in Rhode Island.<sup>6</sup> These figures do not relate, of course, to the children of migrant farmers, who are probably at the bottom of the ladder in national benefits received.

These figures relate to national-income data. Naturally there is only an indirect relationship between income so conceived and tax resources from which school funds must be drawn. The extent of school provision has been assumed in these figures to be proportionate to the tax resources, although it is true that these resources have not been made uniformly available where they exist. Studies by the Advisory Committee on Edu-

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter III, *The American Setting*, and Chapter VI, *Livelihood*; also *Population Trends and Future Problems of Child Welfare*, by Katharine F. Lenroot and Robert J. Myers (*Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 3 [July 1940], pp. 211-212).

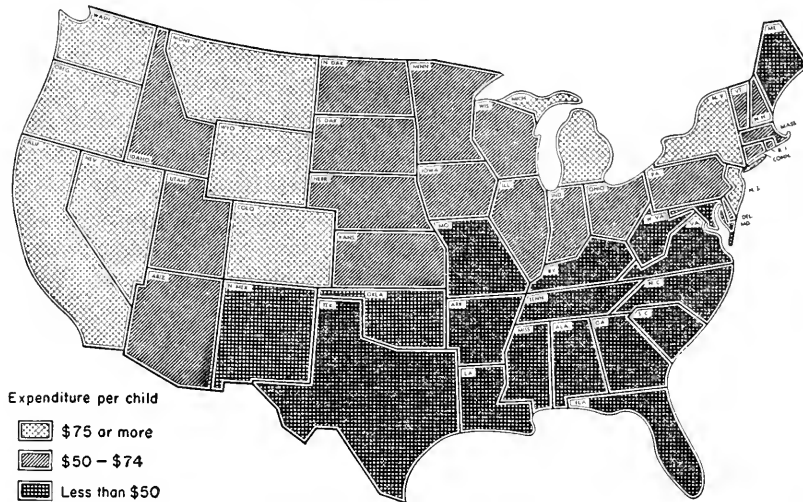
<sup>5</sup> *Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth*, by Newton Edwards, pp. 85, 169-171. American Council on Education, Washington, 1939.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 105-109, 173-176.



cation and by the American Youth Commission show that the relative ability of States to finance school education expressed as a ratio of resources<sup>7</sup> to child population (child population=1) varies among geographic regions from 1.56 to 0.4, and among States from 2.17 to 0.29. This is a wide range in "ability to finance," but not nearly so great as that shown in actual expenditures by State (chart 28). One southern State, for example, spent for education in 1930 as little as \$19 per child 5 to 17 years of age, compared to \$109 per child spent by Nevada and to \$58, the average for the

Chart 28.—Expenditure for education per child 5 to 17 years of age in each State; United States, 1930<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth* (American Council on Education).

United States.<sup>8</sup> Yet, judged by ability to support education (under a model tax plan, calculated as percentage of tax resources spent for education) this southern State had a 49-percent ability rating as against only 16 percent for Nevada, which spent so much more per child, and 38 percent for the United States.

It has been estimated, moreover, that to have spent for education in 1930 the national average of \$58 per child of school age, 8 States, all in the Southeast, would have needed more than the whole of their tax income under a model tax plan—South Carolina nearly twice as much—while several other States could have done it with less than 25 percent of their tax income.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Resources are expressed as percentage of possible tax income under certain model tax systems.

<sup>8</sup> *Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth*, pp. 179-180, table XII. See also *Report on Economic Conditions of the South*; Prepared for the President by the National Emergency Council, Washington 1938.

<sup>9</sup> *Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth*, p. 114.

Although these data and comparable figures for States and regions are relatively new, having resulted from studies by recent bodies such as the National Advisory Committee on Education (1931), the Advisory Committee on Education (1938), and the American Youth Commission, the general situation and its implications have been repeatedly called to the attention of the American public for more than half a century. Several proposals for Federal aid to schools were indeed placed before the Congress before 1900. Yet the situation in its rough outlines still persists.

The unequal school opportunities suggested by these illustrative data might be interpreted as meaning that conditions vary chiefly from State to State and therefore by regions as composing groups of States. This is far from true, however, as is suggested by the differences between farm and nonfarm conditions, which cut across State lines. There is great divergence also between large cities and smaller communities. The 810,000 children 7 to 13, for example, who were reported in 1930 as not attending any school represented the poorest rural areas.<sup>10</sup> And in this connection it is important to recall the fact made inescapably clear in recent years, namely, that our population is replenished from the rural areas, as the cities produce fewer children than are required to maintain population, and replacements must come from farm and other rural areas, where birth rates are much higher.<sup>11</sup> Such schooling as most of these children get depends upon the resources of rural communities.

Inequalities within States are being slowly reduced by greater assistance to local schools from State funds. During the past decade more than 30 States have increased the amount of funds available for this purpose; nearly all the Southern States and the majority of sparsely settled States in the Rocky Mountain and Great Plains areas have undertaken additional financial responsibilities.<sup>12</sup> New revenues, largely from State sales and income taxes, have been drawn upon for this purpose.

In spite of this progress, State school funds today are neither sufficient to support an adequate school program in all the schools nor distributed so as to effect a substantial reduction in financial inequalities among local districts. Only a small proportion of the States have State equalization plans that provide an equitable share of funds to districts that have greatest need and least ability to pay for schools.<sup>13</sup> One of the most serious obstacles to securing additional support, namely, the persistence of outmoded State tax systems, is being only slowly overcome.

The first step by which the majority of States can more effectively reduce educational inequalities within their own borders is to increase by sub-

<sup>10</sup> Advisory Committee on Education: *Report of the Committee*, February 1938, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup> See *The Problems of a Changing Population* (National Resources Committee, Washington, May 1938) and other authorities.

<sup>12</sup> *Statistics of State School Systems, 1935-36*, pp. 27-28. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1937, No. 2, Washington, 1938.

<sup>13</sup> Financing Public Education. *Research Bulletin of the National Education Association*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (January 1937), pp. 29-33. The situation has improved somewhat since these figures were published.

stantial amounts their contributions to local school support, in recognition of the principle that the wealth of the State should educate the children of the State. The burden of taxation would thus be removed from the inequitable general property tax and be distributed among other tax resources that the State can command. A further necessity is the distribution of State funds among localities in accordance with the distribution of educational and of financial need. Methods of appraising these have already been worked out and are being steadily improved; it remains for the States to utilize current knowledge so that the farm child may have as good a chance for an education as the city child.

To make public education available to every child is, for American democracy, a national problem. Even with larger administrative units and programs to reduce educational inequalities within States, the disparities over the country are still very great. Regional and State differences in economic capacity, due largely to the concentration of resources and industry in a few areas, make it literally impossible for a large proportion of the Nation's children to obtain a reasonably good education under existing methods of school support.

The Federal Government has long rendered financial assistance to the States for specified educational purposes, the most recent being an extension of the vocational-education program in 1937, and certain additional funds later granted for vocational education in defense occupations. Under present laws this assistance has had little or no effect in removing educational inequalities among the States. Efforts to establish a program of Federal assistance for this purpose have had wide support. Most of the opposition thus far has come either from States that would have to contribute the greatest amount of revenue, or from those that fear Federal domination over the traditional independence of local schools.

Specific legislative proposals to carry such a plan into effect have been worked out in detail by the Advisory Committee on Education. The proposals of the White House Conference are in harmony with the recommendations of this Committee.

### *Reorganization of Administrative Units.*

It is clear from the data at hand, that the chief difficulty in the way of providing an equitable opportunity to every American child lies in the inadequate financial resources of local school areas. It has been assumed in the foregoing pages that the root of this inadequacy lies in the inequalities of income between rural and urban areas and among the States and regions; and that this difference in income status is reflected in the tax resources available for school financing. A third factor, however, obstructs the provision of adequate funds for schools, and it affects, moreover, not only funds available but also efficiency of instruction and management. This factor is the unit of local school administration, which frequently is

too small for the purpose it serves. Tax resources might be increased to a large extent and still fail to give proportionate improvement in facilities if units of school administration are not reorganized.

Local control of public education is a distinctive characteristic of the American school system. Historically each schoolhouse served a small isolated district. Today, however, distance and natural barriers have been obliterated to such a degree that the district school can and should be replaced in most parts of the country. New community values tend to replace those that traditionally center in the one-room rural school. Yet many thousands of small districts remain, each draining its financial resources to provide even a meager opportunity for its children.

There is no longer any justification for the school-district organization that exists in most of the States. In New York, for example, considerably more than half of the 7,912 administrative units serve fewer than 20 children.<sup>14</sup> By far the majority of the 120,000 local school jurisdictions in the United States are small units that cannot possibly support an adequate school program. Even with an exorbitant tax rate the school funds of most of these units are not sufficient to pay a teacher's salary, to say nothing of the cost of buildings and equipment, books, supplies, and transportation. Estimates based on reports from 21 States suggest that "approximately 16,000 consolidations ought to be effected in the country as a whole for the better education of about 5,000,000 children."<sup>15</sup>

State financial aid and the trend toward State-wide planning have brought many small schools to the point of combining their resources. Fully one-third of the States have already made a start at replanning their school administrative and attendance units. Twenty-five States enacted legislation facilitating the reorganization of local school units between 1930 and 1936.<sup>16</sup> With one-room schools being eliminated at the rate of 2,500 a year, it is estimated that thousands of children have obtained a better education during this same period by virtue of school consolidations alone. Larger units of attendance and administration make possible more effective use of school funds. By the spreading of school costs over a wider taxation area, the burden of taxes is more evenly distributed. By the pooling of these resources better teachers, supervisors, and administrators can be provided as well as better buildings, equipment, and services.

Transportation of pupils is an item that must naturally be considered as increasingly important in cases of consolidation. It usually involves a new cost which in many States is partially offset by financial assistance from State sources. Even where this assistance is not provided, however, the needed

<sup>14</sup> Regents' Inquiry Into the Character and Cost of Public Education in the State of New York: *Education for American Life*, p. 79. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1938.

<sup>15</sup> The Nation's School Building Needs. *Research Bulletin of the National Education Association*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (January 1935), p. 13.

<sup>16</sup> *Biennial Survey of Education, 1930-32*, ch. 7, pp. 14-15; *1932-34*, ch. 8, p. 24; *1934-36*, Vol. 1, ch. 8, pp. 12-13. U. S. Office of Education, Washington, 1935, 1937, 1940.

school services and breadth of opportunity afforded through reorganization furnish adequate justification for the added cost over and above the expense of maintaining separate schools.

The reorganization of administrative units should, of course, go hand in hand with the reshaping of the tax base and the development of the system of grants from State and Federal sources to aid local school programs.<sup>17</sup>

In every State the general property tax has long been the major source of revenue for local government and local school support. In one State (which has eliminated this tax as a source of State revenue) the county government, local government, and local schools drew upon taxes on real property for 73 percent, 65 percent, and 84 percent, respectively, of the cost of their maintenance.<sup>18</sup> Dependence on this tax as a major source of school support places an unfair financial burden on groups least able to pay taxes. It has led to widespread tax delinquency not only among farmers and small home owners, who are the most seriously affected, but among urban landlords and property owners as well. The unfortunate financial situation of hundreds of urban and rural school districts today is largely attributable, either directly or indirectly, to the nearly complete dependence on the general property tax.

The local character of school control is both a strength and a weakness of American education. Most citizens hold the school in high regard as a local institution, yet fail to realize the significance of a fair educational opportunity for every child irrespective of his race, color, or place of residence. Local responsibility has meant good schools for one community and sorely inadequate schools for adjoining communities that may not have taxable resources or qualified leadership. Unwillingness to share local resources through consolidation of schools seriously curtails the effectiveness of public education.

The fundamental condition for removing the principal inequalities in the school system depends therefore on the extent to which the following three proposals of the White House Conference—derived from the experience of educators—can be carried out:

*Increased State support of local schools such as will reduce inequalities in educational opportunity;*

*Federal aid for education distributed among the States in such a way as to reduce educational inequalities;*

*Larger units of local school administration, planned on a State-wide basis.*

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<sup>17</sup> For a full treatment of this subject the reader should go to the publications of the Advisory Committee on Education, the Educational Policies Commission, the National Education Association, the American Youth Commission, and other sources quoted here.

<sup>18</sup> Wisconsin Education Association Research Bulletin: *School Dollars*, p. 14. Madison, 1936.

### *Needed Expansion of "School Age."*

Inequalities in school resources have given our children an uneven chance for education and have limited millions of them to standards no longer in keeping with our stage of advancement. Meanwhile educators have been seeking the extension of school facilities beyond those of the traditional elementary and secondary schools as we know them. The task that confronts the educational world is, on the one hand, to reduce inequalities by improving the facilities where they are least adequate and, on the other hand, to press ever harder for still higher standards, even though they may accentuate the disproportion between the groups least favored and those most favored. The chief purpose of expansion of the school system is educational: It is to benefit children at an earlier age than the traditional first grade, and it is to help those who can benefit from organized educational instruction beyond high school, including those who are planning to enter college. An advantage of educational expansion above high school lies in the fact that it will help young men and women in their vocational careers, and should ease general competition for employment.

*Opportunity for children of preschool ages.*—Experiences of the child before entering school are of fundamental significance in the shaping of his adult life. During these early years physical and mental development occurs most rapidly, muscular coordination proceeds to increasingly complex levels, and social reactions that form the basis of character and personality tend to be established. During these years the broad patterns of conduct in later life are formed.

Children at this stage would profit from a richness and variety of experience that few homes are able to provide unaided. School and home working together have a far better chance to provide it. Although teachers have much to contribute to parents regarding the learning processes of young children, they can also learn much from parents about the influence exerted on a child by his family life and relations. Moreover, nursery schools and kindergartens provide a suitable transition from home life to the more formal atmosphere of the elementary school.

In the best nursery schools and kindergartens the child's health and nutritional needs also are carefully watched; good language habits may be established; self-management is encouraged; problems of adjustment are recognized and may be dealt with through corrective procedures. The child's range of experience is broadened and he becomes accustomed to playing and working with others of his age. His growing individuality is recognized and sympathetically guided through orientation of his activities rather than by repression; this tends to give him a sense of security and self-reliance. The beginnings of individualized education may be instituted here as they accord with the developmental needs of each child.

The kindergarten, or an equivalent experience, is now recognized to be an established part of the public-school system. In 1936 nearly a third of

the approximately 2,221,000 children 5 years of age were attending kindergarten. There are of course the usual wide disparities between urban and rural enrollment; 45 percent of the 5-year-old children in cities are enrolled in kindergartens, but only 5 percent of those living on farms or in villages of less than 2,500 population.<sup>19</sup> This indicates that nearly all children in States and regions of a predominantly rural character are deprived of this educational advantage. The percentage of cities of 2,500 or more reporting public kindergartens in 1936 varied from none in several States to 100 percent in one State; and for the whole country was 37 percent.<sup>20</sup>

Apart from an indeterminate but apparently large increase in private effort during the past decade, the greatest advance in preschool education has come through the establishment by the Work Projects Administration of more than 1,500 nursery schools.<sup>21</sup>

That progress is being made is indicated by the gradually increasing proportion of elementary-school children who were enrolled at the kindergarten level. Between 1932 and 1936 increases in kindergarten enrollment were recorded in 20 States.<sup>22</sup> Sample studies show that more cities were providing kindergartens in 1938 than ever before, the smaller cities showing the greatest gains.<sup>23</sup> Rural places, however, report no such progress, and the nursery schools established by the W. P. A. have shrunk in number as a result of reduction in appropriations; relatively few of the nursery-school programs thus established have been incorporated into permanent local public-school budgets.

Progress might be quickened by more widespread understanding on the part of parents, teachers, and school administrators of what preschool opportunity can mean to the child. Kindergartens or equivalent experience ought to be made part of the public-school opportunities available to every child as rapidly as may be possible. Experimentation has proceeded far enough to indicate that children might well be permitted to enter the public schools at 4 or 5 years of age, provided educational content appropriate to the preschool level can be offered. Wider provision of this opportunity is contingent upon better school support, particularly in rural areas. Meanwhile it would seem good economy to incorporate the nursery schools established by the W. P. A. for children in needy families into the public-school system as rapidly as financial and other circumstances permit.

A practice now used in more progressive schools is to eliminate grade

<sup>19</sup> Kindergarten Enrollments, by M. D. Davis. *School Life* (published by U. S. Office of Education), Vol. 24, No. 9 (June 1939), p. 279.

<sup>20</sup> *Number and Percent of Cities Reporting Public School Kindergarten Enrollments in 1936*. U. S. Office of Education (mimeographed table, 1 p.).

<sup>21</sup> Home Economics Education in the United States Since 1934: In *Preschool Education*, by Esther McGinnis. *Journal of Home Economics* (published by American Home Economics Association, Washington, D. C.), Vol. 31, No. 7 (September 1939), p. 448.

<sup>22</sup> *State Enrollments for Public Kindergartens Distributed by Urban and Rural Areas for 1936 and State Total Enrollments for 1932*. U. S. Office of Education (mimeographed table, 1 p.).

<sup>23</sup> Kindergarten Enrollments, p. 280.

designations, formal promotions, and "marks" in the first 2 or 3 years of elementary school and to use an informal approach to learning so that entrance into the more formal type of school may be a natural, easy transition. In this way the kindergarten-primary years can be unified with the lower elementary grades as a period of early childhood education.<sup>24</sup>

*Continuing services for youth.*—For different but equally potent reasons the school career of most children should be lengthened at the upper end as well. After leaving school hundreds of thousands of young people are compelled to adjust themselves to a world which neither utilizes the services they can render nor provides them with adequate educational assistance in making necessary adjustments. At best only three-fourths of those of high-school age go to high school; less than a fifth of these go on to college. Youth has but two choices: To continue schooling or to find work. Most of them seek employment upon leaving school, yet during the depression a third to a half were unemployed.<sup>25</sup> Preliminary figures from the 1940 census returns show that nearly two-fifths of all persons unemployed and seeking work during the week of the enumeration were youths under 25 years of age.

To an increasing degree this situation has become a challenge to the public schools. Energies of school officials of necessity have been directed primarily toward meeting the needs of a secondary-school system in which attendance has seen a tenfold increase since 1900.<sup>26</sup> Estimates by the United States Office of Education indicate that the proportion of youth of high-school age actually attending high school rose from 51 percent to 72 percent between 1930 and 1938. Financial resources have been so greatly needed for carrying on the established school program that little has been available for services to youth who have finished high school or those not in school, even when the pressing need for these services has been recognized.

The problem is being accentuated by the fact that the number of youth 15 to 19 years of age in the Nation's population has been increasing and is now at its probable peak. "The present number of such youths is about 850,000 greater than the number in 1930 and 1,800,000 greater than the number estimated for 1950 on the basis of births in years now past."<sup>27</sup>

Despite a lack of established procedures and trained personnel much has been done to ameliorate the problems of youth during recent years. Secondary-school programs in many places have been expanded by the establishment of postgraduate courses, junior colleges, part-time cooperative education, and vocational-guidance and placement services.

<sup>24</sup> The Primary Unit—An Aid to Children's Progress, by M. D. Davis. *School Life*, Vol. 24, No. 10 (July 1933), pp. 297-298, 318-319.

<sup>25</sup> *How Fare American Youth?* by H. P. Rainey and others, pp. 34-35. D. Appleton-Century Co., New York, 1937.

<sup>26</sup> *Statistical Summary of Education, 1935-36*, p. 12.

<sup>27</sup> *A Program of Action for American Youth; recommendations of the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education*, p. 7. Washington, 1939.



The Federal Government has created the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the Federal Committee on Apprenticeship to provide sorely needed services of a type for which the schools are not equipped (see pp. 246–248). The extension of public-school opportunities for persons up to 18 or 20 years of age is now and will continue to be an urgent need. For those who are to carry on their formal education it involves the continuation of college-preparatory courses. For the majority of youth, who now terminate their formal education upon completing the secondary school, extension implies that personal and vocational guidance should be added to the scholastic activities. This should be accompanied, however, with a program designed to broaden the general educational base of the curriculum, so as to give this group some of the cultural opportunity lost through not going to college. Extension should also take place in the direction of prevocational and vocational opportunities adapted both to the capabilities of the youth being served and to the employment possibilities in the surrounding area.

It becomes increasingly necessary to make available continuous guidance for further education, vocation, and health to youth who have left school. This service should continue until such time, at least, as satisfactory occupational adjustment is made. Skilled guidance, based on adequate cumulative individual records, knowledge of the capacities of the individual, and acquaintance with local facilities for training and employment should culminate with placement in an occupation. This is a relatively new and uncharted field of service, for which not many standards can as yet be set down with any assurance; yet progress is being made, and the challenge cannot long be ignored. The schools should cooperate with public employment services where junior employment offices have been established, and this is being done to an increasing extent. In other places the schools should make some direct provision for meeting the need. In any case guidance and training in schools must be developed in earnest and intelligent cooperation with whatever corresponding services may be available in the local public employment services.

### *Redirection of School Experiences—Method and Content.*

There are few subjects in the social sciences that have a more extensive literature, theoretical and technical, than has education. In the number of practitioners, of plants, of training schools, in the number of citizens' groups that exercise active cooperation and surveillance, the school system has few rivals. In technical literature the school draws upon pedagogical research, psychology, medicine, political science, and upon administrative, fiscal, and engineering knowledge. The professional personnel to which technical literature is supplied is large and avid for information that it may use for improved service and for professional advancement; the lay public, particularly parents, constitutes a vast body of interested persons,

to whom sound and important information on education is addressed in a thousand ways, and who, because of their direct interest in the school system, might be counted on as a ready army to promote educational progress. Some of the progress in the educational field is reflected in the fact that school expenditures tend to be at the top of local public expenditures and in the fact that control of these expenditures by local administrative units is beginning to be transferred to larger units. Yet in many essentials progress in the application of recognized educational principles is still slow—especially slow, perhaps, by comparison with the rapid developments in thinking and techniques. In bold outline and dogmatic form the following guides for building an educationally sound system may be set down:

Education is experience; results are reflected in the sort of person the child becomes more than in what information and skill he acquires.

Education, therefore, must be individualized to the maximum degree possible, or it cannot become part of the child's experience.

Education is for life in society: it must therefore help to prepare the child for his social adjustments; it must prepare him for human relationships, for civic activity, for contributing to as well as profiting from community life.

Education is an enabling process by which the child is prepared to accommodate himself to, and benefit from, his material and cultural environment. Therefore he should learn to understand the technological world around him; he should merge himself with the artistic achievements of his culture, expand his emotional capacities, learn to utilize leisure.

For the greatest chance to profit by education the child should have health, vigor, and stimulation; the school should be efficient, competently staffed, adequately equipped.

*Individualization.*—Mass-production methods are not applicable to education. Each child is physically, mentally, and emotionally different from every other child. Whether handicapped or normal, each is motivated and guided along lines which his own individuality will determine; learning experience is of necessity adjusted to individual growth patterns. Although democracy gains its objectives by group action, each group depends for social effectiveness upon the personal effectiveness of the individuals of which it is composed.

Techniques are now available for the first and most important formal approach to individualized education. It is now possible to appraise the individual in terms of health and development, of particular talents, of scholastic achievements, and of ability to learn. Children with a physical or mental handicap can be readily identified, and corrections can be made more frequently than ever before. Experience has been gained in planning programs adapted to the normal child, to the child of unusual intellectual

ability, to the child with a physical handicap, and to the child who is mentally retarded. Guidance services are being developed to help each child establish goals attainable for himself and to work out ways and means of reaching these goals.

In promoting the individualization of the pupil significant advances have been made during the past decade in respect to techniques of evaluation, in the use of cumulative records, and in the establishment of co-operation between school and home. Knowledge of procedures for individualization, however, has advanced far beyond actual practice. One of the reasons why progress in adjusting school programs to individual needs has been slow lies in inadequate school budgets. It is estimated, for example, that only about 11 to 12 percent of the children 5 to 20 years of age in this country have the advantage of a medical examination within a given year.<sup>28</sup> Yet this is a first essential in finding out a child's capacities or handicaps, and in planning his work accordingly. Mental tests and other technical appraisals are widely used, but the number of teachers who can administer and interpret these tests properly is still discouragingly small. Another difficulty has been excessive "teacher load," which leaves little time for individualization; the typical elementary-school teacher instructs a class of 35 pupils for approximately 6 hours a day.<sup>29</sup>

Since meeting individual needs within the classroom is the responsibility of the classroom teacher, it is of primary importance that teacher load be adjusted to this need, which means, in most places, increasing the number of teachers.

All this, however, takes care of externals only. An enriched and flexible curriculum—which is far from characteristic of the majority of schools—is even more essential than the tests and records by which pupils may be classified and recorded. In this respect and in the improvement of methods of teaching specific subjects the past few decades present a record of progress beyond compare. Especially in the integration of subjects, such as history, economics, and geography, the useful arts, and the physical sciences, American education is moving in a new and continuously advancing era. Progressively more adequate instruction is given in the arts as a way into culture: Music, drawing, dramatics, plastics. The sciences, the practical components of modern technology, the training of the hand in workshop, and other ways of learning through direct experience have spread through elementary and secondary schools far beyond the confines of the so-called "progressive" schools. Thus the curricular materials, as well as basic "tests," for individualization exist. A first task is to make them available, not only in the few well-financed communities but as nearly as possible in all school systems.

<sup>28</sup> Estimated from fig. 4 (p. 96) in *The Prospect for Youth. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 194 (November 1937).

<sup>29</sup> *The Teacher Looks at Teacher Load. Research Bulletin of the National Education Association*, Vol. 17, No. 5 (November 1939), p. 229, table 4.

With these tools at hand teacher and school personnel must still be depended on to use them in such a way that the assignment of pupil, the selection of curriculum, the advancement through grades, the elimination of some subjects or specialization in others may be adjusted to the individual characteristics of the pupil. Such adjustment depends in the first place on the expertness of the teacher in recognizing the pupil's needs and in devising the necessary curricular adjustment; it depends in the second place on the administrative flexibility of school policy and school management; and it depends in part on the availability of means for discovering physical, mental, or behavior handicaps that may disturb or retard the child, on access to facilities for treating them, and on continuous and cooperative contact between school and parent. The keys to progress are, therefore, first, financial resources and, second, appropriate training of teachers and other school personnel.

*Education in human relationships.*—It has been borne in upon us as a result of studies of human behavior during the past few decades that people—and that means children—can actually be trained for happiness; that they need not always take all the chances on whether their associations with their fellows will bring joy or bitterness, self-confidence or discouragement. Children may be trained, to a greater extent than had been realized in the past, to get along with people, to give and to take, to respect others and thus gain respect for themselves. Much of this training the child may get at home in the family, so far as family life succeeds in developing rather than repressing, in engendering love rather than fear, in increasing the scope of cooperation in household responsibilities rather than regimenting assignments through authoritative discipline. Religion adds to and leavens the training obtained through the resources of the family and community. Religious training, if it transcends formalism and ritualism, may add to this training through family and through church.

What, specifically, can the school do in a practical way to prepare the child for happy human intercourse?

First, it can make school life itself happy, by having appropriate equipment, by giving the child individual attention, and by guarding against overburdening him with tasks. The removal of physical and mental handicaps, patience with the child's home troubles (and helpfulness where possible) are obviously to be desired. But bitterness, unfriendliness, and anti-social impulses in the child arise above all from conditions of discouragement. This often is one of the most far-reaching and potent sources of resentment toward others, of withdrawal from companionship, and of loss of the way to the affection of one's fellows. An abundant source of such discouragement comes from too much competition in class and school, in scholarship and athletics. Obviously, then, competition of individual against individual must be kept within bounds, and its effect upon the less aggressive child carefully watched.

The school may help to train the child for happy human intercourse by the constructive use of leisure time. With the exception of reading for fun and excitement, most leisure-time activities are carried on in association with others, under conditions that are conducive to friendly and cooperative human relations. Yet it is not always easy to arrive at these social values of leisure-time activity spontaneously. Many children grow up without knowing how to use their leisure time; their diversions tend to be exhaustive rather than recreative. The task of training is, in part at least, to create in child and adult an understanding of the resources for leisure that exist within themselves, as well as to instruct in the use of resources that are provided for them.

Few schools are meeting this need today. An important reason has been the tendency to think of recreation as an activity program—and largely physical activity. Attitudes have too frequently been neglected in favor of facts and skills; avocational values have been lost to view in the effort to prepare youth for vocations. But the attitudes of school authorities toward education for leisure are slowly changing. Some progress is evident in bringing larger proportions of pupils into participation in school activities, in fostering appreciation through observation, and in giving emphasis to the leisure-time values of literature, music, the graphic arts, and personal relationships.

Education for leisure, through the school, must involve the entire school personnel, for its scope is as broad as education itself. It is attainable through the example of teachers and leaders who themselves have caught its elusive quality.

The child should be helped, moreover, to appreciate not only his own efforts but the efforts of others as well. This capacity to absorb the contribution of others, if properly fostered, in no way contradicts the principle that every child should be given opportunity for creative expression. This capacity exists in all children in some degree; its release requires opportunity, motivation, and guidance.

To make the teaching of the possibilities of leisure-time enjoyment an integral part of education requires funds, plant, and personnel within the school system; but, above all, it requires a belief in and a recognition of the significance of leisure activities beyond the playing of games, the pursuit of competitive standing, or even an interest in health and hygiene.

*Preparation for gaining a livelihood.*—There is a tradition in our modern industrial culture that work is the antithesis of schooling. The prevalence of compulsory-school-attendance laws and the concentration of enforcement measures on keeping the child from work seem to intensify this tradition. It is true that the chief threat to school attendance beyond the early school years has come from the competing interest of employment. Often the parents were anxious to increase the family income in this way; for years the possibility of acquiring cheap and amenable labor led employers to

seek child laborers; the lure of being "grown up" in all its guises has exercised a great fascination to children, and many have wished to go to work for the status it gave quite apart from the desire to escape the regimentation of the schoolroom. On the other hand, educators have for many years attempted to break down this sense of separation. School and work are both preparation for life. School may, in fact, be molded and adjusted so as to serve the purpose both of academic instruction and of orderly introduction into the working world. Continuation schools, trade schools, and the introduction of science, manual training, and practical arts in the secondary schools were partly intended for this purpose; the development of vocational guidance, vocational training, and placement services in the schools is the most recent and positive step in that direction.

Events of the past decade or two, particularly of the depression period, have brought the close relationship between school and work into the large area of public policy. The reasons are various. First, as a result mostly of changes in birth and death rates the proportion of youth in the population has increased in comparison both with the elementary-school group and with older groups.<sup>30</sup> The number of youth, therefore, who are between school age and working age is larger than ever. Second, the great expansion of opportunity for high-school education in this country has multiplied the number of pupils in secondary schools—that is, of youth in this transitional age—to a phenomenal extent. The chart which shows this increase speaks eloquently of its galloping speed (p. 149). The depression has reenforced this trend, as a dearth of jobs reduces the pressure upon the youngsters to leave school for work and leaves a larger number of this age group available for secondary-school enrollment. Thus a larger proportion of youth, who eventually go to work, have more time for school education. This period becomes available for a more effective preparation in school for the tasks that await youth at work; and it offers a longer period for cultural development, to the end that the gap in cultural attainments between college man and worker may be lessened.

The nature of these work tasks, however, appears to have changed as a result of far-reaching developments in occupations and in industrial technology. Trade training for highly skilled occupations is less useful; opportunities are more widely scattered, requiring greater mobility of the worker; skilled labor is yielding predominance to semiskilled labor in mass production; professional and clerical occupations are increasing in relation to manufacturing and agricultural occupations. And unemployment increases the gap between school and job. The general answer to this situation has been given by educators in a recent study in these words:<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> On this general subject see especially *The Effect of Population Changes on American Education* (Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association, Washington, January 1938).

<sup>31</sup> Regents' Inquiry: *Education for American Life*, p. 22.

“To make his way, as a practical matter, under this American system, what a boy needs vocationally is not so much a ‘trade’ when he leaves school at the age of 16, 17, or 18, as sound general knowledge undergirding a family of occupations, an understanding of the scientific facts and the economics lying back of these trades, the ability and the character to work effectively with others, and an appreciation of the way changes come and the way the individual may best adjust himself to them. To cap this, at the very end, just before he has a real chance of getting a job, he needs an immediately marketable skill. When a boy, so trained, gets a job he will acquire the necessary particular knowledge and dexterity on the job as a ‘learner.’ In some fields he may be expected to come back to school for special courses, organized in cooperation with labor and industry. Under such a plan, no time will be wasted on elaborate skills to be forgotten before a job is available, and much faster learning will result since the boy will know better what he wants and for what purpose he wants it. And there will be given each youth what is now almost entirely lacking, a good general knowledge of the practical scientific and economic facts underlying his whole field of work.”

How much “redirection of school experience” does this situation call for in the latter portion of the elementary-secondary school program? Obviously if the school is to help in preparing the child for work this help must be available to him at the age when this can be done, from 14 to 18 at least, or possibly to 20 years of age. At 16 he should be permitted to go to work, but only within the restrictions relating to hours of work and to hazardous occupations that are suitable at that age. (See *Employment*, p. 229.) If no work is to be had, opportunity should be provided for him—or her—on some public-employment program for youth. For vocational choice and placement this 16-year-old entrant into the world of employment should have had the benefit of guidance and assistance within the school before leaving it.

For those who are willing to stay longer in school but are not planning to enter college or professional school, there should be available within the secondary-school system the three items necessary for justifying and for profiting from further school experience between the ages of 16 and 20:

1. A curriculum offering cultural preparation for the present-day world, with its scientific, esthetic, economic, and social orientation.
2. Vocational training of the generalized kind that may be adapted to a variety of occupations, rather than the acquisition of special skills.
3. Guidance and placement service, or cooperation with public employment service, with its implied technical and psychological tests and its study of local and national opportunities for employment.

It admittedly has been one of the most difficult tasks of educators to make such general statements mean something in practice, particularly with respect to curricular content. Not only has the provision of money, facilities, and personnel been difficult, but also assurance as to what, concretely, is to be done, what is to be taught, and what training should be given. The experimental stage has not yet been passed, but enough is known about it to leave no doubt as to where to begin.<sup>32</sup>

In the Regents' Inquiry<sup>33</sup> referred to previously, practical expression has been given to the relative importance of these steps for vocational preparation in the following table. Although the amounts shown apply only to New York State, the statement as a whole is significant. Items showing costs of the extension of the school system to include pregrade school work are given also.

*Estimated new current expense [New York State]*

Item	Amount
1. For kindergartens in schools not now maintaining them. . . . .	\$5, 500, 000
2. For strengthening elementary program for handicapped children. . .	1, 500, 000
3. For carrying through modernization of school districts (temporary). .	100, 000
4. For improvement of rural-school services in connection with centralization, including increase of teachers' salaries. . . . .	2, 000, 000
5. For offering vocational education as part of every comprehensive high-school program. . . . .	1, 100, 000
6. For keeping in school unemployed pupils who now leave before age 18. . . . .	5, 250, 000
7. For supervising out-of-school projects carried on by pupils who have not obtained full-time employment. . . . .	5, 450, 000
8. For advising with pupils who have left school, until they have made a vocational adjustment or until they are 19 years old. . . . .	950, 000
9. For the provision of technical and semiprofessional education in grades above the twelfth. . . . .	6, 700, 000
10. For additions to staffs, increases in salaries, and improvement of facilities at teachers' colleges. . . . .	1, 000, 000
11. For twenty Regents' fellowships for teachers. . . . .	60, 000
12. For increase in pension funds to permit earlier retirement of teachers. .	1, 700, 000
13. For increasing the number of State scholarships to 6,000 at \$100 to \$300 each. . . . .	1, 000, 000
14. For 100 graduate fellowships at \$400 each. . . . .	40, 000
15. For coordinators of adult education. . . . .	1, 080, 000
16. For expanding adult vocational education. . . . .	4, 000, 000
17. For State aid to regional libraries. . . . .	500, 000
18. For improvement in services and facilities of State Education Department. . . . .	50, 000
<b>Total. . . . .</b>	<b>\$37, 980, 000</b>

Corresponding data on a national scale are not available, but estimates on a few items have been prepared by the Educational Policies Commis-

<sup>32</sup> There is an abundance of material on the subject in recent educational literature, including publications of the President's Advisory Committee on Education and of the American Youth Commission.

<sup>33</sup> Regents' Inquiry: *Education for American Life*, p. 160.



sion<sup>34</sup> for the country as a whole, and these give a perspective on the field. With a foundation cost for all children of a minimum of 10 years of schooling set at \$2,147,000,000, the expense involved in providing an additional 4 years of schooling for the age group 16–19, inclusive, is estimated at \$1,066,000,000. This amount contemplates that 86 percent of the youth 16 years of age, 74 percent of those 17, 62 percent of those 18, and 50 percent of those 19, would take advantage of the additional facilities. Textbooks, special clothing and equipment for physical-education and science classes, student activities, and other items are estimated to amount to an additional \$110,000,000; supplementation of income when necessary to enable all children to remain in school the minimum 10 years and the estimated number to remain 14 years would cost an additional \$170,000,000 for the country as a whole, and “lifting the poorest schools to a reasonable minimum of efficiency” is put at a half-billion dollars.

*Civic responsibility and character formation.*—The schools have accepted an increasing responsibility in character building and in training for citizenship. Everything in the life of the child contributes to the building of his character, and no one can say what is most important. Some types of experience are known to be more effective in building “good character” than others. Happiness is a builder; so are cooperation, the sense of receiving the approbation of others, achievement, and, in an indirect way, good health. Wherever the child experiences these things, his character is being “built.” The family can be the first and possibly the greatest character builder, friends and playmates may be, the church, and as he grows older, the public life of the community. Certainly the greatest positive contributions to the character of the child are made by those from whom he is willing or eager to learn, whose example he chooses to follow, from whom he covets recognition, affection, approval. This is the reason why the democratic way is so deeply important for character building, and why it should characterize those places with which the child is in most frequent contact. This means home and family, school, church, playground, club, party, friends of both sexes.

The school’s function as a character builder may be extraordinarily large, but the instruments at its disposal are mostly indirect. It cannot teach character; it can, within limits only, give it tangible practice. As example and its imitation are among the most potent instruments in building patterns of behavior, the subjects of history and literature are character builders in schools. Projects of civic activity and social service may help. The example of the teacher’s way of life may be of supreme value to the extent that the teacher is accepted by the child as a model. Mutual respect of teacher and parent is paramount. Although the building of character cannot easily be reflected in specific curricular provisions, the school, if

<sup>34</sup> *Education and Economic Well-Being in American Democracy*, p. 183. Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association, Washington, 1940.

conducted on democratic principles, is one of the most effective instruments in the formation of character.

The very elements that enter into the formation of character likewise contribute to education for citizenship. Schools today seek to foster the habit of getting along with and considering the rights of the other fellow. Even more, our schools are fostering a concern, not only for *the* other fellow, but for others in the aggregate—a concern for the general welfare. Slowly passing out of the picture is that schoolroom procedure in which success is wholly based on the results of intense individual competition. Entering the picture, even at the kindergarten level, is a new emphasis on the cooperative approach to common tasks. Noncooperation brings the mightiest effort of democracy to a standstill. As with the home, the church, and other community institutions, the school is adding the weight of its influence to the end that youth shall learn how best to get along together.

Closely bound up with cooperation are those twin elements of citizenship education—freedom and tolerance. Understanding and critical use of these integrals of democracy have long been essential but sometimes poorly defined objectives of the school. Times of stress bring the realization that there can be no freedom for one person without tolerance in the other. And that tolerance which is compelled or which lacks the factor of critical judgment in its exercise becomes an empty thing. Such education cannot be learned from the telling but rather from use. It would be a mistake to say that the schools have done a good job of engendering wise use of freedoms or the exercise of tolerance. Through the combined efforts of all community institutions most youths become passable citizens, although some grow up in this democracy with but little realization of the meaning of freedom and tolerance. Every crisis in world affairs brings restrictions which reflect the weaknesses in this aspect of education for citizenship.

The kind of citizen desired requires many more attributes than those mentioned. There is, for example, the need for every person to act for the improvement of the society in which he lives. At once this involves initiative, self-reliance, critical judgment, and an ethical quality that compels the use of knowledge for good. Like character, of which education for citizenship is a component, these elements of citizenship cannot be taught. But, like cooperation and the exercise of freedoms, they can be learned. And they can be learned by every child.

As the concept of character cannot be divorced from that of social obligation, of accepting responsibility for a share in working for the common good of community and country, the task of civic training becomes part of the business of character building. Here the ways in which the modern school may train its youth become clearer and more tangible, less dependent on the subtle influence of spirit and example. Curriculum may be constructed, specific methods devised, projects executed.

In the first place, there is general agreement among educators that civic training is important and does belong in the essential curriculum of elementary and secondary schools. Nor is this training conceived any longer to be tasks such as acquiring knowledge of the number of members of the House of Representatives or of the qualifying age for senators. Civic training may be presented in several ways, each having a specific value, but not necessarily requiring a separate teaching technique. The presentation of material from the international point of view may help to counteract prejudice and provincialism; facts and the recognition of the interrelationship of economics, politics, government, and history should help to interpret democracy not merely as an ethical idea, but as a *modus operandi* essential for practical results. The participation by pupils in suitable administrative and policy-making tasks of the school will help to develop the habit of taking part in civic affairs and a sense of the reality and usefulness of civic procedures. Therefore, the student's civic training may well be shifted largely from classroom to school, from school to community. Experiments in recent years have demonstrated many progressive methods for obtaining maximum active participation by pupils.<sup>35</sup>

### *Organization, Personnel, and Equipment.*

It is irksome to the public and to the educator alike to find the financial refrain recurring again and again in discussions of school programs. It is certainly true that education cannot be bought and sold like a commodity. It has to be acquired and assimilated by the pupil. Even more it has to be lived and experienced in common by teacher and pupil as interacting individuals. Inspiration, as the teacher well knows, is never one-sided. Only that teacher can inspire who is himself inspired by pupils and by the common human aims that bind parent and teacher, community and child. The quality of education is in the spirit. The same spirit and aspiration, however, must guide the supporters of education that they expect to find in its practitioner. In this sense education, like health, in the words of the late Dr. Hermann M. Biggs, "is purchasable." It is purchasable through appropriate organization of resources and administration, through the training and employment of competent personnel, and through the provision not of the minimum equipment for the rudiments, but of suitable equipment for efficient service.

The minutiae of organization are not within the scope of the present chapter. In fact the only technical aspect of organization with which it is concerned, because it underlies the possibility of maximum use of resources, is the size of administrative units. Reference has already been made to the importance of these units for determining the best use of school

<sup>35</sup> An especially useful document containing specific suggestions is the recent publication of the Educational Policies Commission, *Learning the Ways of Democracy* (Washington, 1940).

funds. The most obvious point is that many school districts actually lack the taxable resources even for a minimum of elementary schooling for their pupils, to say nothing of kindergartens, vocational training and guidance, experiments and research. It is almost equally obvious that the variety of teaching talent, of specialization, and of professional leadership that is needed by children in any locality would constitute a burdensome and ineffectual overhead organization for a small body of pupils, even if funds were available for the employment of the required personnel. Organization involves size and distribution of school plants as well as their financing; it involves attendance units which are not necessarily coterminous with administrative or fiscal areas. It involves arrangements and relationships between independent units for the interchange of facilities where even large administrative units are too small for certain functions; and it involves arrangements with State and Federal governments in the planning and distribution of aid, and in the utilization of recreational, library, and other services that extend beyond the limits of the usual administrative area.

Emphasis on flexibility of administrative units and on the study of the optimum size effective for various educational purposes, therefore, is related not only to the financial resources of the school system, but also to questions of overhead efficiency, coordination, and educational planning.

*School personnel.*—With respect to appropriate personnel for the educational system the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy can contribute nothing new, nor can it call attention to any relationship between teacher and community that has not been often and well expressed by both professional educators and the public. Rather it is the task of this Conference to do its share in the “responses”—that is, to give formal acknowledgment and recognition to the important truths that parents and school leaders have emphasized again and again.

First, and in full recognition of its paramount significance, reference should be made to the importance of the personnel of the school board. The relative freedom of the public-school system from inroads of political patronage has been due in large measure to the watchfulness of the lay public—parent and school board. The school board has been, in the United States, foremost among the forces working for progress in education. It is not enough, therefore, that school boards consist of well-to-do, respectable, settled, and honest taxpayers. They must be sensitive to educational concepts, to the needs of youth, and to the deep democratic urge of America. Through them the school should be made vital as a leader in American culture, as well as a conservator of the values established and maintained by the generations that have gone.

School boards have the first say in the provision of funds, in the employment of administrators and teachers, in the definition of salaries, tenure, professional qualifications, and in the operation of the merit system in the schools. To the extent that they share in the advances in thought and

conviction achieved by the educators of the country, the school boards will be the real power for progressive education in America.

If leadership, good will, and enlightenment in the lay powers of the school world are assumed, the quality of the school will be determined chiefly by the quality of its professional personnel—teacher, supervisor, administrator. What a teacher knows about things, what he knows about teaching, depends on the training he has received. An investigation in one State indicates that “of college seniors tested [in 1928 and 1932] for available academic knowledge, the group intending to teach constitutes a large division centered below the average and scattered over a wide range.”<sup>36</sup> Almost three-fourths of the elementary-school teachers in the country (1930–31) had received no college training or less than 3 years of such training.<sup>37</sup> Even among high-school teachers only a fourth had received more than 4 years of college training. It is not that teachers do not wish to study; it is rather that the necessity for earning a living presses as hard upon teachers as upon those in other occupations, and applicants for jobs are likely to present the minimum qualifications required by employers. If school boards will accept teachers without adequate preparation, teachers of that description will present themselves; under these conditions there is little inducement for further study.

Part at least of the explanation for low standards lies in the salaries offered; often they are not attractive enough to justify extensive preparation on the part of the candidate, and the authorities must accept the kind of service commensurate with the price they offer. In nearly half the States (22) the average salary of teachers, supervisors, and principals in 1935–36 was less than \$1,000 a year.<sup>38</sup> Rural teachers' salaries in 20 States averaged less than \$780,<sup>39</sup> which was less than the income received by three-fourths of the country's wage-earning families during the same period. Negro teachers in 14 States in 1935–36 received nearly one-third less salary than white teachers.<sup>40</sup> Nor are other phases of employment always attractive. The majority of school systems, both large and small, have no comprehensive personnel policy with respect to selection and promotion according to merit, nor as to salary schedules, sick-leave provisions, assurance of tenure, or retirement provisions. Manifestly such short-sighted policy is calculated neither to secure nor to retain those persons who are best qualified for the important task of educating youth. Boards of education can make significant improvements in personnel policy, including both

<sup>36</sup> Study of the Relations of Secondary and Higher Education in Pennsylvania: *The Student and His Knowledge*, by W. S. Learned and Ben D. Wood, p. 333. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Bull. No. 29. New York, 1938.

<sup>37</sup> *Education in the Forty-Eight States*, by Payson Smith and F. W. Wright, pp. 91–92. Advisory Committee on Education, Washington, 1939.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>39</sup> *Consumer Incomes in the United States*, p. 96 (table 4B). National Resources Committee, Washington, August 1938.

<sup>40</sup> *Education in the Forty-Eight States*, p. 100.

selection of teachers and teacher welfare, without adding materially to the cost of schools. This need calls for immediate action in communities throughout the land.

It should not be assumed from these references to conditions of employment that teacher training itself has brought into practice all that is known by educational technicians about the training of teachers. There is urgent need for the progressive improvement of teacher-education curricula and standards. Prospective teachers should have direct contact with growing children during much of their pre-service education. The provision of continuing in-service education for all teachers is likewise greatly needed. Tactful and stimulating supervision is a first requisite. And it is important in in-service education that the teacher be given an opportunity to work under a democratic administration where he has both the privilege and the responsibility of contributing to school policy.

All this requires cooperative planning within States by officials of public schools, public and private institutions for the training of teachers, State departments of education, and professional organizations of teaching personnel. Planning should cover the fields of recruitment and selection of prospective teachers, the strengthening of faculties in training schools, improvement in teacher-education curricula, and the relations of institutions responsible for the preparation of teachers with programs of in-service training and with needed legislation. Statutory action is required for the raising of standards that affect teaching; establishment by law of higher minimum salaries, actuarially sound retirement systems, and tenure surrounded by reasonable safeguards will tend to attract a higher caliber of person into the profession. Requirement of a college degree for certification will help to improve standards of preparation.

And when all this has been done, it will still be necessary to observe the teacher and his performance from year to year. Teachers are not exempt from the incidence of personality difficulties any more than others are. These may be light and transitory or serious and progressive, and the dangers to the pupil from a severely maladjusted teacher are not to be taken lightly. Good physical and mental health are highly important elements in effective teaching. Nevertheless, 15 to 20 percent of teachers "lack the kind of vigorous health needed for successful classroom work."<sup>41</sup> It is estimated "the chances are almost 7 to 1 that in the course of 12 years of public-school education a child will encounter at least *two* maladjusted teachers—teachers who are unstable and neurotic if not psychopathic."<sup>42</sup>

*Equipment.*—Directly or indirectly the modern school seeks to provide equipment for the pupil far beyond schoolhouse, desk, pencil, and book,

<sup>41</sup> *Fit to Teach; a study of the health problems of teachers*, p. 39. Ninth Yearbook (February 1938). National Education Association, Washington.

<sup>42</sup> Mental Hygiene and Teacher Recruiting, by Marion E. Townsend. *Mental Hygiene*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (October 1933), pp. 598-604.

although these are of course the first requisites. It provides also health supervision, and scholarships to enable the bright child to continue his schooling when his parents are unable to do so. It has facilities for the study of unadjusted children and for individual social service to bring school and home together in the interest of the child. Its equipment includes recreational facilities for relaxation and organized play, athletics and dramatics. The modern school has its library for study and reference and also for enjoyment and for cultural pursuits. It supplements its own equipment by such cooperative relationships with parents and with community agencies as may provide resources organized and conducted outside the school proper.

Foremost, of course, in the school's equipment is the school plant. Efficiency is materially increased where educational buildings and equipment are adequate; inferior and unsuitable facilities tend to limit the effectiveness of otherwise superior methods and personnel. The depression left a huge accumulated need for land, buildings, and materials of instruction. Even apart from losses due to normal deterioration and other natural causes, the changes in school program that began long before the present decade have rendered obsolete many of the facilities now in use. For this reason, and despite a declining elementary-school population, additional new buildings and equipment will be sorely needed for some time to come.<sup>43</sup>

Present-day school facilities are not adequate to meet present-day needs. School grounds are wholly inadequate, according to current standards, in a large number of schools. Early in the 1930's more than 5 percent of the children attending school in 17 States were using buildings that had been condemned as unsafe or insanitary; in 20 States, 2.3 percent of the pupils could attend school only part time because of insufficient housing facilities; another 4 percent of the pupils in 23 States were housed in portable, rented, or other temporary structures.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, more than half of all school buildings in the country are one-room schools serving small populations.

High-school populations are still increasing and will probably continue to do so for another decade; communities are demanding more adequately equipped school facilities for recreation and other uses; broader school programs require specialized facilities such as clinic and consultation rooms, preschool rooms, homemaking laboratories, rooms for handicapped children, libraries, shops, and visual-auditory education equipment. These new requirements of the broader community-service program of public schools add greatly to the existing need beyond that determined by the requirements of the pupils.

Capital outlay for schools during the 1930's has been sufficient to meet barely half the need. There is in 1940 a shortage of facilities the cost of

<sup>43</sup> *American School and University, 1939: Population Trends and the School-Building Program*, by William G. Carr, pp. 13-18. American School Publishing Corporation, New York, 1939.

<sup>44</sup> *The Nation's School Building Needs*.

which, if supplied, would probably exceed \$2 billion.<sup>45</sup> Because of limited tax resources pay-as-you-go construction is at an extremely low ebb. Many cities and school districts have accumulations of bonded indebtedness that will effectually prevent the floating of new issues for capital construction for some years to come.

During most of the 1920's, annual expenditures for capital outlay ranged between \$300 million and \$400 million. For the Nation as a whole, school-building construction lagged behind needs during that period. By 1934, however, capital expenditures had dropped to an estimated \$100 million which meant that needs were accumulating three or more times as rapidly as they were being met.<sup>46</sup> To meet this cumulative shortage, which was taking on emergency dimensions, grants and loans from the Public Works Administration have made possible, since 1933, nearly one billion dollars' worth of school buildings.<sup>47</sup> In addition to this, nearly a quarter billion dollars' worth have been made possible by the Work Projects Administration, and several million dollars' worth of buildings have been constructed with the aid of National Youth Administration funds. But even this aid from Federal sources has not enabled communities to provide all the necessary facilities.

Large additional resources must be devoted to school facilities during the next decade. The first step is for communities to determine their needs for land, buildings, and capital equipment as they are defined by local population trends and the demands of new programs and of community use of facilities. From these data comprehensive plans for school construction can be developed. At this point participation of the State will become necessary. State-wide plans should be made for the reorganization of attendance and administrative units to permit larger schools and better services; technical assistance should be given in the planning of new school facilities, and financial assistance should be extended to many communities specifically for school buildings. Some of this assistance undoubtedly will have to come from Federal sources. This is part of the recommended program of Federal assistance to the States for education and part of a continuing Federal public-work program.

Plant involves furniture, books, fixtures, playgrounds, and space for the various services implicit in the modern school. It means also personnel both for teaching and for other services. It carries with it, therefore, other equipment in the more generous meaning of that word.

*Equipment for related services of other agencies.*—Most conspicuous and pressing of the additional equipment needed is that for health service, health supervision, and health education. Much of this subject is covered elsewhere in

<sup>45</sup> *Education in the Forty-Eight States*, p. 110.

<sup>46</sup> *The Nation's School Building Needs*, pp. 21-32.

<sup>47</sup> Total estimated cost of public schools, auditoriums, gymnasiums, and school-library buildings under construction or completed as of April 1, 1940, was \$960,708,439. (Figures from Public Works Administration.)



this report. (See *Health*, pp. 307–310.) Health education, however, being an intimate part of the school program proper, requires comment here.

Health education is potentially the most important single factor affecting the physical well-being of the growing generation. Many institutions and agencies contribute to health education; they include the family physician, public-health department, school, the family itself, and numerous commercial enterprises. Among these the school has the opportunity to be one of the most positive and continuing influences for good health. This opportunity has been recognized by educators as an obligation and has been accepted as an integral part of the school program.

In relatively few places, however, do schools take full advantage of this opportunity. Where medical examinations are given, the very number of children to be examined frequently militates against realization of the educational values to the child of this examination. The regimen of the school is often unfavorable to good health habits; principles of mental health, both preventive and corrective, are often disregarded. The picture is happily brightened in a small but increasing number of schools by effective leadership. Here the child's experiences relating to health are capitalized; custodian, teacher, nurse, and school physician take advantage of every opportunity to impart knowledge and foster good habits as well as to relate their own efforts to those of the home.

However effective their efforts may have been in the past, most schools need to make additions to and improvements in their programs of health education. Every school should provide regular health instruction, involving not only that given by a qualified teacher but related instruction by all teachers whose subjects have a bearing on health. The school has the opportunity not only to teach the facts of personal and community health but also to motivate the child to use his knowledge. Every health experience in school may be made educational; dietitians, school physicians, dentists, and nurses can accept it as their obligation to teach facts and foster good habits along with every service rendered, if their duties are so defined and their work is thoughtfully integrated with the curriculum. Ways and means should be found also by which education in child health can be transmitted to parents; in this way the gains in health education of children can be consolidated and made effective in the home.

Since the onset of the depression and the subsequent exhaustion of the resources of very many families that had some savings or other assets, a very large portion of the American people have had to accept governmental assistance in obtaining the necessities of life; and the larger families, those with the greater number of children, tended to be among the first to require and to receive this assistance. From the point of view of public-assistance authorities or of the private charitable agencies that attempt to supply the necessities of life these children are members of families, and they share the fate and the succor that reaches their families.

To the school, however, this condition is primarily a problem of the child whose attendance becomes irregular, whose attention wanders, whose success in the schoolroom is retarded in a dozen ways when food, health, clothing, or creature comforts are inadequate. The school cannot convert itself into a relief agency, but it can do several things. It can provide school lunches, especially where W. P. A. resources are also available; it can place upon its teachers and administrators the responsibility for vigilance in discovering indications of such privations and for following through, with parent and community agency, to the procurement of the needed assistance; it can take the necessary steps to assure remedial treatment by other agencies when its own health supervision discovers needed service for eye, ear, or teeth, or for other physical or mental handicaps. These things can be done in such a manner as will give the child integrated, unified consideration, which is not attainable by sending him plodding from agency to agency and from worker to worker.

There has been a tendency in many larger school systems to include health, welfare, recreation, and library services for school children in educational budgets. As the demand for these new school services became intensified, however, particularly during the depression, school authorities began to consider the possibility of procuring these services through cooperation with the appropriate community agencies in each field. Today the schools increasingly depend upon social-service agencies in the community for the provision of these services. It will require sustained vigilance to make certain that this substitution of the cooperative goal does not result in the omission of these services from the budgets both of schools and of other agencies.

Cooperative relationships among the educational services provided by the public are already being established. Schools, libraries, and museums seek by joint effort to make educational opportunity continuous from early childhood; schools and recreation agencies are beginning to coordinate their efforts to provide leisure-time opportunities for children and adults, and are using school plants as the centers of activity.

Closer working relationships are being established between school and State labor authorities in the control of child labor; a few school systems are extending educational services and are cooperating with public employment agencies in offering guidance and placement services to young persons leaving school. In the area of health there is better definition of and coordination between educational and medical functions, and increasingly satisfactory relationships are developing between school, family physician, and public-health department. With respect to other welfare services the schools tend to leave the determination of need and the provision of necessities to existing welfare agencies. These cooperative efforts, it must be admitted, are noteworthy as yet in only a relatively few communities; they are not yet generally characteristic.

Comprehensive and community-wide planning is the primary means by which the school and other community agencies can correlate their efforts. Community use of school facilities is one of the ways of stimulating it. By placing the branch library in the school building, for example, and by utilizing both indoor and outdoor facilities of the school for neighborhood recreational purposes the school itself can serve as a facilitating agency. Reciprocal use of records and personnel by schools and other agencies offers another means of cooperating. In the issuance of employment certificates for children leaving school for work, in establishing sound working relations between school and juvenile court, and in furnishing guidance and placement services, such records can be made increasingly useful.

The more detailed cooperative relations for recreation and library services will be discussed at greater length in the following chapter. Whatever specific form the cooperative arrangement may take, these services should be so closely integrated with the school as to constitute part of its equipment or to supplement it adequately.

### *Research and Planning for Child Needs.*

In education, as in other enterprises, policy making involves choices that can be wisely determined only on the basis of facts. Fact-finding studies in child development, administrative procedures, school finance, materials and methods of instruction, and preparation of personnel have demonstrated the values that can be realized from research both for technical improvement and for economy.

Financial and educational problems encountered by schools during the depression gave rise to extensive educational research and to policy planning on a national scale. The Advisory Committee on Education appointed by President Roosevelt made studies of the relation between the Federal Government and public education over a period of 2 years. Unofficial studies of longer duration have been conducted on broad educational problems by such bodies as the American Youth Commission, the Educational Policies Commission, the Commission on Human Relations, the Commission on the Secondary School Curriculum, and others. The findings and recommendations of these research and deliberative groups give promise of redirecting the course of education during the next decade.

Permanent educational agencies have continued and expanded their research programs to furnish needed facts and figures. At the national level, the United States Office of Education has added two divisions to provide further research and consultative services. State and local school surveys have carried on a type of research which provides evaluation of policies and procedures as well as recommendations for new types of effort. At least two States and a number of cities have conducted surveys of their entire school systems since 1935; among these the New York (State) University Regents' Inquiry into the Character and Cost of Public Educa-

tion in the State of New York is notable for its comprehensiveness and forward-looking recommendations. A third to a half of the States have recently made comprehensive studies of local school units; State planning boards in 24 States have studied particular aspects of school administration.

Compared, however, with the number of school systems in existence whose policies should be directly affected by research, the extent of effort cited is small. Local planning in the form of budgeting is annually engaged in by most school systems, yet relatively few of them employ research personnel to furnish the necessary underlying facts. State boards and State departments of education have broad policy-making functions, yet fewer than half of them have divisions of research.<sup>48</sup> Even among professional personnel there is some lack of appreciation of the function of research; many citizens are even less convinced of its values than are educators. Necessary funds, which often would be repaid many times over by savings as well as by improvements, have been withheld, partly because of financial stringency and partly because of ignorance.

Sound educational progress is contingent upon the application of research to specific school problems. This cannot be done altogether and exclusively in some central place; much of it can only be conducted locally, in individual school systems. Further research in child development and evaluation of pupil progress is especially needed. There should be research divisions in every State department of education; the annual appropriations of the United States Office of Education should be larger and should be increased progressively so as to permit more research, the extension of services to States and local communities, and further stimulation of local research activities. Research is valuable only when its results are put to use. But only a small proportion of research findings already available are actually being applied, and the small percentage of educational budgets devoted to research indicates that educators are not yet taking it seriously.

No single agency outside the home includes within itself such a variety of ways for fitting the child for life as does the school. No other agency brings together in so many ways and so consistently the masses of the people with their local administration, citizen with government. In no other public activity is the relation between taxes and services, between efficiency in management and cost to consumer seen so clearly. In no other activity are ideas and ideals seen in such close and parallel march with the enabling factors of material resources as in that of public education through the schools. No other expression of community life affords a greater and more comprehensive vehicle for national and local culture, for combining pride in social achievement with aspirations for future enrichment in public morality and civic cohesion. For child and parent, for young and old, the school is the most important instrument in the making

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<sup>48</sup> *Educational Directory, 1939*, pp. 5-24. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1939, No. 1. Washington, 1939.

of democracy. Its welfare and progress must hold a place of high honor and importance in our concern with children in a democracy.

## Education Through Religious Training

In countless ways religion has always been part of man's cultural heritage. Its understanding has been part of his education. No one who is familiar with the history of man can doubt the important part that religion has played in the development of his ideas, his moral standards, and his institutions. Religion is one of the oldest and most fundamental phases of man's individual and collective life. Historically it has been and is still an integral part of his total culture. Although its expression has taken various forms, it still remains what it has been through the ages—one of his deepest concerns. To it man has turned for hope, for inspiration, and for support in a changing world of personal and social experience.

Religion has had no less a part in the development of the life of our Nation. A quest for religious freedom was one of the principal motives that led our first settlers to seek their home in the New World. The founding fathers not only acknowledged their dependence upon God but sought His aid and guidance in shaping the affairs of the new Nation. They wrote the guarantees of religious freedom into the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Upon the coins we use in purchasing food, clothing, and shelter is impressed the symbol of this conviction—"In God we trust." Before our highest officials assume the responsibilities of office we require that they take an oath upon the Bible and in their oath invoke the help of God. Before the Congress proceeds to the enactment of laws to govern our common life it invokes the guidance of God. The sky lines of our cities are pierced by the spires and domes of churches and synagogues, and the countryside is dotted with chapels. In his address at the initial session of the White House Conference in April 1939 the President of the United States said, "We are concerned about the children who are outside the reach of religious influences, and are denied help in attaining faith in an ordered universe and in the fatherhood of God."

The relation between religion and the tradition of American democracy has been touched upon earlier in this chapter (see p. 148). But it is not enough that the children of today, who will be the citizens of democracy, shall be physically fit, technically efficient, or well-informed and clever. As was pointed out by the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, many of the earlier sanctions of conduct have ceased to be widely accepted, and new ones have not been developed to take their place. The hope of democracy depends not only upon the development of scientific inquiry, technological progress, and social organization, but above all upon personal and social integrity. There is grave reason to question whether a merely secular code of ethics can carry this load. The

testimony of history warns us that morality unsupported by deep religious conviction rests upon an insecure foundation. It was out of such a conviction that President Washington in his farewell address said:

“And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.”

One of the fundamental problems that our democracy has faced has been the reconciliation of individual freedom and social unity. Sheer individualism tends toward social chaos; sheer unity tends toward regimentation and the complete domination of the individual by the totalitarian state. Either of these values pursued in isolation from the other has proved to be self-destructive in the end. Experience seems clearly to demonstrate that only in the voluntary cooperation and self-discipline of free persons lies the solution of this problem. By placing its emphasis upon the worth of the individual and at the same time upon a corporate fellowship, religion has historically succeeded to a large degree in securing an integration of the freedom of persons and a voluntary associated life. Because religion has been concerned primarily with fundamental and comprehending values, it has been a powerful cohesive force not only in religious groups but often in massive social movements and in national life.

As culture has evolved in the American scene in response to deep-lying social forces, it has developed very unevenly. In scientific discovery, technology, and material achievement there has been phenomenal progress, but in the appreciation and achievement of the higher spiritual values—in art, morals, and religion—there is a great cultural lag. In increasing numbers and with deepening poignancy we are beginning to sense this distortion of our culture. The neglect of spiritual values has led in a considerable degree to the disorganization of our world. As an inevitable result of such disorganization a mood of disillusionment and pessimism has fallen upon many of our people, including great numbers of our youth. In this mood we have lost a convincing sense of the meaning and worth of life. It becomes increasingly important that we recapture and reexamine the *ends* of living, and bring the means we use to achieve them into harmony with these ends.

This situation is the more important since in the light of social psychology it is difficult, if not impossible, to assist growing children to achieve a convincing and impelling sense of moral and spiritual values in a culture in which ends have become greatly obscured by the techniques of living. Creating a sense of values in our children becomes in large part a problem of our adult world. Its solution must be a large-scale social solution. It is probable that in preparing to give our children an experience and ap-

preciation of spiritual values we shall deepen our own sense of these values and thus restore the balance of our culture.

It is at this point that we come upon one of the most pressing needs of our democracy. That need, both for individual persons and for the Nation, is for a wholehearted commitment to a socially worthy cause that is capable of engaging the intellect, kindling the imagination, evoking the emotions, and releasing effort. This commitment to great social ends in its essential nature, as shown by our own history in periods of national crisis, in the great mass movements of history, and in the contemporary forms of totalitarian states, is comparable to a religious attitude. If American democracy is successfully to compete with the emergent forms of totalitarian states, it cannot content itself with the mere mechanics of social organization. It must develop wholehearted commitments to the ideals of a free and cooperative society comparable in their devotion to, but different in their quality from, the dynamics of "blood and soil" and a "5-year plan."

In this connection it should be noted that the menace of totalitarianism is tending to bring education and religion into a new relationship of mutual support. In their free and creative forms both are jeopardized by the totalitarian state.

History shows that the causes most effective in evoking commitment have not been remote, abstract, and verbal, but immediate, concrete, and practical. It also has demonstrated that effective as self-centered causes may be, the most effective causes are those that are in the interest of others and of the social good. Many persons have found and are finding meaning and motivation for their lives in selfless abandonment to altruistic causes, such as education, public health, the improvement of conditions of labor, better housing, child welfare, the enterprises of organized religion, the founding of maternity centers and social settlements, and the efforts to achieve world peace.

It is a noteworthy historical fact that in western civilization, medicine, law, charity, the care of the homeless, and education had their origin in religious institutions and were for a long time undifferentiated from them. In time many of these functions have been taken over, at least in part, by secular agencies. As was brought out in the report of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends,<sup>49</sup> the church and the family have for some time been giving up functions while the State and the Federal governments have been taking them on. Even so, as these changes have taken place, many who have gone into activities such as education and social work have continued to find inspiration and support for their work in religious conviction and devotion.

<sup>49</sup> *Recent Social Trends in the United States*. Report of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, Vol. 2, chs. 20, 25. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1933.

*The Religious Needs of Children.*

The child, whether in the family, the school, the church, or engaged in leisure-time activities, needs to have personal appreciation of the higher spiritual values. Any program of child development that falls short of this level not only is superficial from an educational point of view but is not consonant with the ideals of democracy. It would be possible to provide the child with adequate economic support, proper housing, the best of medical and dental care, and equalized opportunity for formal education and still provide no more than totalitarian states are able to provide. Democracy involves not only freedom and individual initiative but also the development of the capacity to make choices and to appraise them in the light of fundamental and comprehending values. Above all, the child in a democracy needs assistance in achieving for himself a scale of values consistent with a philosophy of life. Such a scale of values does not come about primarily through things which we do to or for children. It is largely the result of the free and creative participation of children in judging and carrying through courses of action in concrete situations in their everyday life.

The religious needs of children are not set off from their other needs. Religion is concerned with the life of the child in every dimension—family relations, food, housing, medical care, economic resources, education, leisure-time activities, and employment. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that all these phases of the child's experience shall be regarded as opportunities for the development of religious attitudes and motives and that the growing child shall give effective expressions to these attitudes and motives in the actual situations that arise within all these areas of his experience.

Furthermore the child has the right to expect of all the institutions that are responsible for his guidance a harmonious development of his whole self. Too often the agencies that are responsible for his guidance, such as the family, the school, and social agencies, have confined their efforts to a considerable extent to imparting knowledge and skills and to forming habits. There is a growing understanding and appreciation of the importance of the emotions in the life of growing persons. Whatever the origin of tensions in various forms of frustration may be, it is when these conflicts involve the emotions that they become especially destructive of personality. Consequently the constructive and wholesome organization of the emotions from earliest childhood is of the utmost importance. The fact that emotions are intimately related to moral values and are evoked when these values are jeopardized brings them into relation with the functioning of religion, which is primarily concerned with ultimate values.

The child needs to have a conviction of his own intrinsic worth as a person and also a conviction that he has a significant and secure place in



a rational and moral universe. This need has become greater in the light of the vastness and complexity of the universe as disclosed by modern science and in the increasing size and complexity of modern social organization. It is even more accentuated by the social insecurity arising out of the unemployment or meager subsistence of parents and the lack of opportunity to find significant work. Faith in the God of an ordered and moral universe makes it possible for the growing child to face the vastness of the universe and the stern realities of social living with the assurance that as a person he is of inestimable worth and that his aspirations and ideals have weight in the scales of human destiny. Such assurance is heightened if the child or youth is a responsible participant in the processes of society and creatively contributes to making his world a better world. Many find in the sense of their responsible relation to God an incentive to and a fulfillment of their highest aspirations.

Whatever else we may help the child to achieve in the fulfillment of his needs, we have not met his greatest need until we have helped him to build a practical philosophy of life. Such a philosophy of life not only rests upon an intellectual view of the universe but also involves the affirmative cultivation of wonder and appreciation. Increasingly as he matures he needs to see life as a whole and in its complex interrelationships. He needs a perspective that extends far beyond the immediate and often conflicting experiences arising out of the many relationships in which he is involved. Historically man has achieved this end chiefly through art, philosophy, and religion. From the standpoint of an effective orientation and ordering of one's life or the life of a people, religion has been particularly fruitful because it is concerned not only with fundamental but also with practical and operative values.

In the light of these considerations it is clear that the primary responsibility in the religious development of the child rests upon parents in the family. It is in this intimate and personal group that the attitudes of the child are first formed—attitudes that in the view of many psychologists profoundly affect the adult life of the growing person. Here he is first introduced to the religious inheritance of the particular religious group into which he is born, as he is introduced to his mother tongue and to other aspects of his particular culture. Here the foundations are laid for the moral standards that are to guide his conduct through life. Here in an orderly group life where the primary relationship is between individuals it is possible for him to have an experience of life that will give him a conviction of the worth of the individual and the essential goodness of an ordered universe. Religion, like culture itself, is not communicated merely by formal processes of education, important as these have proved to be, but is primarily the result of participating in the life of a significant group in which religion is a vital concern. In religion, as in general education, the family is the oldest and the most fundamental educational

institution. However, the religious needs of the growing child outrun the resources of the family as do his other needs. Responsibility for the religious nurture of children and youth must be shared by the church and other social organizations that are concerned with their guidance. This calls for the closest mutual understanding and cooperation between the family and other community agencies in the religious nurture of children from their earliest years to maturity.

*The Changing Place of Religion in the Child's Formal Education.*

The present status of the child's formal education in religion is the outgrowth of a long historical process. The earliest schools in America were predominantly religious. In the relatively homogeneous New England colonies religion was an integral part of public education. In the relatively heterogeneous middle colonies education was carried on by the several religious groups in parochial schools. In the southern colonies education was aristocratic but definitely religious in spirit.<sup>50</sup>

As a result of the interaction of several factors, such as the rise of the district school, the increasing demands of an expanding culture upon the curriculum and the sectarianism of American religion, the teaching of religion was excluded from the public schools.

Although it did not assume its present form until after more than a century of our national existence, the principle of the separation of church and state was rooted in the conviction of the founding fathers that our Government should deal impartially with diverse religious groups. In the historical perspective of more than a century and a half, we reaffirm the principle of democracy which leaves church and state free to exercise their functions each in its own sphere, even though individual persons sustain relations and responsibilities to both institutions as citizens in the state and as members of the church. Under this principle everyone is guaranteed freedom of worship according to his own conscience. This principle the American people are determined on any account to preserve.

Historically it was never intended that the separation of church and state should deprive children and youth of the resources of religion. Nevertheless certain results flowed from the secularization of the public schools which have been and now are of great significance in making the resources of religion available for meeting the needs of children. Finding themselves confronted with the responsibility of providing education in religion, the churches have responded in several ways.

<sup>50</sup> Similarly, the earliest colleges in America were founded by the church, as in the case of Harvard, Yale, and Columbia. Harvard was established for the training of ministers, the earlier congregations "dreading to leave an illiterate ministry to the churches when our present ministers shall lie in the dust." Their curricula consisted chiefly of the classics and religion. Of the 246 colleges founded by 1860 only 17 were State universities and only 2 or 3 others had any State connections. The academy, the precursor of the modern high school, which had its rise around 1750 and reached its highest development in 1850, was definitely religious in purpose. (*Public Education in the United States* [Rev. Ed.], by Ellwood P. Cubberley, pp. 250-255, 264-268; Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1934.)

So deeply have certain religious groups felt the need of bringing up their children under the influence of religion that they have attempted to carry the entire responsibility of education in parochial schools at their own expense, in addition to paying taxes for public education. Other churches adopted the Sunday school, an institution that was originally designed for the underprivileged and gave a meager amount of religious instruction on Sundays. In more recent years individual churches, or churches cooperating in certain communities, have provided instruction in weekday schools conducted in church property on time released from the public schools upon the request of parents, or in after-school hours. Churches in many communities, generally cooperatively, have conducted religious schools during the summer vacations. In some instances religious instruction is given in public schools as a regular part of their programs.

Despite these various types of church and school response, the religious needs of children are very imperfectly met in the case of many who belong to the various church constituencies. It has been estimated that approximately one-half of the children and youth of the United States receive no formal religious instruction.<sup>51</sup>

### *An Unsolved Problem.*

From the historic as well as the civic point of view, the exclusion of religious teaching from the public schools solved, at least temporarily, one phase of the problem of the education of the American child. But it has left us with another phase of the problem still unsolved. The problem which our generation faces is how to utilize the resources of religion in meeting the needs of children without in any way violating freedom of conscience or the principle of the separation of church and state.

The problem of providing adequate religious nurture for all the children and youth of the Nation is greatly complicated by the fact that its population is made up of persons adhering to different religious groups of varying beliefs, ecclesiastical polities, and religious practices. This problem does not arise in the same way in societies where there is a state church. In a democracy, however, these very differences are at once the result of freedom and are the resources for the enrichment of the common life. The solution of the problem of the religious nurture of children in a democracy does not lie in the direction of ignoring these differences or of reducing these differences to a meaningless irreducible minimum of belief and practice. It lies, rather, in the direction of a wholehearted and tolerant recognition of differences and of their utilization for an ampler understanding and appreciation of the many-sidedness of religion in the life of a democratic people.

<sup>51</sup> The Department of Research of the International Council of Religious Education calculates that of the estimated 30 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 in 1926, approximately 16 million received no form of religious instruction.

Fortunately, at the time when we are feeling the urgency of this problem, there is a growing sense of common ends which all religious groups are seeking to achieve for their children and youth irrespective of their particular theological beliefs or church polities. There is also a growing sense of the common ends which the churches, the schools, and the social agencies are seeking to attain in meeting the needs of all our children and youth. By sitting down together with these commonly felt needs in mind and asking what specific projects might be undertaken cooperatively in given local communities by parents, teachers, churches, and social agencies an experimental beginning might be made in the solution of the problem. Already there are some experiments in this direction. In any case, whatever the difficulties that inhere in the situation we have inherited from the historical development of American culture, some solution should be attempted and, we believe, may be found. A satisfactory solution will require a critical analysis of the problem in the light of more than a century of experience and a careful weighing of alternatives. It may require the development of new approaches and the exploration of new patterns not to be found in our educational tradition.

The difficulty of the solution of the problem which our generation has inherited does not in any sense relieve the churches of responsibility for the religious nurture of the children and youth of the Nation. The churches are under obligation to improve, wherever possible, their educational programs in the light of the best knowledge that they possess concerning the nature of religion and its relation to life and of the educational process. Pending the working out of a more adequate program for the total education of the child, they should make the utmost use of the educational opportunities that they now possess.

## Chapter IX

### Education: Leisure-Time Services—Libraries

#### Leisure-Time Activities and Recreation

**B**Y leisure time in modern civilization we mean, for the adult, the hours when not engaged in working for a livelihood or in keeping house; for the child, the hours that are not devoted to formal educational activities. During the leisure time thus defined many things are done that are not commonly thought of as leisure-time activities, such as sleeping, eating meals, and getting to and from places. By common usage recreation is spoken of as the chief leisure-time activity, especially for children. But many other activities also fall into this category. Among them are the practice of the arts and the varieties of informal education such as music, dancing, the social amenities, avocational studies, physical culture. In many leisure-time activities recreational objectives and educational purposes are closely intertwined, and relaxation and cultural achievement are hardly distinguishable. Frequently the same institutions of the community provide both services of purely recreational character and services in which the educational interest is equally obvious. Thus it comes about that the services of agencies in the interest of leisure time tend to involve a combination of two major motivations: On the one hand, to meet the urge for play and recreation on the part of the "consumer" and, on the other hand, to bring about educational objectives as defined and sought for the "consumer" by those who offer leisure-time services.

This dualism in the objectives of recreation is of far-reaching importance, both practical and theoretical, even though it is generally obscured by the nature of the recreational activities. For the "consumer" recreation is a search for pleasure; any educational value it may have for him lies primarily in the pleasurable response and only incidentally in whatever other constructive values the particular activity may happen to possess. This pleasure objective is the conscious motivation of the individual—the consumer of recreation. It is the driving power that makes recreation meaningful and possible. The second objective is less his own; it is more that of the educator, who sees in the various components of recreation factors for physiological and psychological development, for social adjustment, and for conveying many of the cultural possessions of his group. There is also a third social objective often attributed to recreation—the pursuit of health, physical and

mental. Most, if not all, recreational activities are indeed, except when carried to excess, potent influences for the advancement of health and hygiene. But a good part of their potency lies in the fact that the health objective, like the social objectives of recreation, need not be obvious but can be borne by the promise of pleasurable response.

We are concerned here primarily with the leisure-time activities of children and with the services provided for them. The immediate activities are those in which spontaneous interest exists or may be aroused—activities inherent in child life, the nature of which we learn from the child himself. In the biological sense these are, for the child, the most highly educational. Their content is determined by the instinctive and unfalsifiable response of the child to his environment. Space, the simplest materials, the child's observation of life, the sense of well-being, exuberant vitality, and experimental adventurings are the equipment for these recreational activities. But the child is preparing for adult life as well as satisfying his immediate needs. On the face of it the early play activities of the child may seem to have little bearing on his capacity for recreation in later life or on its socializing and health-promoting functions. There is, however, a deep and enduring quality to the established habit of spontaneous recreation, unconfined and pleasurable, that prepares and trains future capacity for play, regardless of how little visible similarity there may be between the doings in the play pen and the programs of the club, municipal park, or State camp. The ultimate educational objectives are served by enabling and encouraging the spontaneous play of the child as much as by providing playgrounds and organizing athletic contests or community pageants. And this is true no less of commercially supplied recreational facilities than of public or community provisions.

Play, to the child, is hardly distinguishable from the rest of life; it is the center of all interests and activities, to which other interests, even eating and sleeping, are often subordinate. To speak of play as a need of the child is therefore to speak about that which to him is the greater part of and the most important thing in life. Unfortunately, it is true that under unfavorable conditions the impulse to play may be, and often is, stifled or lost. To avoid the development of passive attitudes, spontaneity must therefore be protected and encouraged in the whole setting of the child.

As the child grows older, play gradually comes to be distinguished from other types of activity; it becomes "recreation." Play and recreation have incomparable values for the individual in and of themselves. To emphasize recreation as a means of reducing or of preventing juvenile delinquency, of developing character and citizenship, or of some other worthy end is to slur over its essential character, its creative role as fun, relaxation, release, joy. Play and recreation are a part of the soil in which personality grows. It is during leisure that one is most free to be himself. In play one explores a whole range of roles and relations, one achieves social adjustment and

group effectiveness, or, under unfavorable conditions, one experiences defeat, rejection, and disorganization.

All persons require types of experience through which the elemental desire for friendship, recognition, adventure, creative expression, and group acceptance may be realized. Normal family life and favorable conditions of play and recreation contribute much toward meeting these basic emotional needs. They help supply, also, certain needs that arise in the process of growth and development of the child: The need for congenial companionship of both sexes, for emotional development, for a healthy independence, as well as other needs that arise at different stages in the individual's passage toward maturity. Play is an important means, also, for the development of motor, manual, and artistic skills, for contact with nature, for creative contemplation, for nonvocational learning, for the socializing experiences of group life, and for responsible participation in community life.

If these important needs are to be met, certain basic instruments or conditions are necessary:

All children require time for play, places in which they can move freely and safely, play areas and play materials which they can use by themselves. The value of self-expression and spontaneous play cannot be overemphasized, even though it is necessary to provide such opportunities through the deliberate effort of their elders.

All children, under certain conditions and for certain kinds of organized recreation, require trained leadership in addition to space and facilities for informal play.

Many children also require specialized recreational guidance. This type of service is best represented in what is widely referred to as group work, with its emphasis on the importance of group life for personality development.

These are some of the fundamental values of recreation that the following discussion regards as axiomatic. Our present concern is therefore chiefly with the problem of organized facilities: Facilities that will assure for children suitable recreation for their spontaneous, immediate needs and for the implicit preparation that is thus afforded them for play as grown-ups—facilities, moreover, that are deliberately planned and conducted for the social values in recreation and for the promotion of health, as well as for direct pleasurable experience.

This concern with leisure-time services, as with other phases of interest of the White House Conference, is predicated further upon the underlying objective of building a democratic life. Recreation for children in a democracy should reflect, therefore, in its program, organization, and operation those values which are implicit in the democratic way of life. This means, among other things, a program that emerges from the life of the people; a

leadership that represents and releases the deepest needs and interests of persons; a method that utilizes group experience and group channels; and a form of administration that is democratic, not autocratic.

### *Unequal Opportunities for Recreation.*

In the actual resources for recreation, as in other phases of the child's needs, we find certain inequalities in distribution that handicap some children as compared with others. The limitations coincide in part with those which—because of economic circumstances—render the lot of minority groups, of rural inhabitants, and of the people in certain geographic regions less favorable. More particularly, the following groups of children generally have fewer-than-average opportunities for enjoying recreational resources:

Children of families in low-income groups.

Negro children.

Children in rural areas and small towns.

Children in the blighted slum sections of large cities.

Children in certain age groups.

Girls, as compared with boys.

Children with special problems or handicaps.

*Children of families in low-income groups.*—For those families in the lowest-income brackets who cannot purchase recreation goods and services from their own resources recreation agencies, both public and private, offer but inadequate resources. This is particularly true for such items as toys, children's books, home-play equipment, transportation, holiday houses for vacationing families, concerts, the theater.

*Negro children.*—The number of recreational agencies providing programs specifically for Negro children is small; the number of trained Negro recreation leaders is negligible, and training facilities for them are almost totally lacking; community parks, camps, and community centers are often closed to Negro children. This condition is general throughout the United States but especially is it true in the Southern States, where the Negro population ranges from 9 to 50 percent of the total. Children in certain other national minority groups, such as the Mexicans, also are often neglected.

*Children in rural areas and small towns.*—Although children in rural areas and small towns have certain natural advantages in their environment for play and recreation, these advantages are frequently offset by a deficiency in opportunities for social contacts. Some facilities for recreation in rural areas, provided by outside agencies without local participation, tend to be so highly specialized that their usefulness is restricted. The children particularly neglected are those in rural nonfarm areas, in migratory families, and in families living in depressed rural communities.

*Children in the blighted slum sections of large cities.*—In congested sections of urban centers where incomes are low, rents relatively high, and often 2 to



5 people are living in one room, where air and sunshine and backyards for play are at a premium, where streets are filled with traffic and therefore dangerous—in such areas playground-park acreage is most needed, yet most limited. In many places the rate of available play space is as low as 1 acre to 5,000 population, as contrasted to the desirable standard of 1 acre per 100 population in the average residential area.

*Children in certain age groups.*—For the preschool child play programs are the exception rather than the rule. For young people leaving school, more than half of whom have not completed their high-school education, social contacts and recreation opportunities are a necessity. This is particularly true for those who are unemployed. Adolescents are at a critical stage of development and require special attention. Yet facilities for this out-of-school group are desperately meager.

*Girls, as compared with boys.*—There are more agencies, more funds, and more play facilities for boys than for girls. In certain respects the delayed entrance into the recreation field of organizations providing for girls and women, the differentiation between the education given to boys and girls, and the accent on active, “manly” sports in many centers and organizations have prevented girls from having comparable advantages. Co-recreational activities for boys and girls in their teens, as well as more equitable service for girls, are desirable.

*Children with special problems or handicaps.*—For children with physical handicaps or those burdened with ill health, mental retardation, or behavior problems, and for children who are unusually bright as well, recreation is one means of effecting some degree of adjustment and health improvement. Unfortunately recreation centers usually have no special programs suited to the capacities of children with physical handicaps. Few municipal recreation authorities have adequate guidance programs or leaders trained to deal with the needs of children who have such handicaps or those who have personality difficulties. Private agencies have developed some excellent experimental programs, and public agencies are giving leadership assistance to some children's institutions. But further expansion and far greater effort and concerted planning among welfare, education, and recreation agencies are required if the basis is to be laid for the development of a truly creative play program for children.

### *Purchasable Recreation*

The leisure-time activities of children center successively around three points: The home, and those opportunities that are within the scope of attainment through home and family; the school, beginning with nursery school and extending as far as high school for some, college for others; the recreational services of the community through public and voluntary agencies. The child may be expected to draw for his recreation upon all

these centers at the same time, although their importance usually develops in the order stated. They are all important, however, and inequalities of opportunity are present in all of them.

The home as the first resource for recreation performs both a direct and an indirect function. The family members, the dwelling and its surroundings are a direct resource and arena for play. The financial resources of the family are an indirect means, to the extent that recreation is a purchasable commodity. How the family as a group may serve the leisure-time needs of the child involves the entire subject of family life: The spirit, habits, and cohesion of the family, the number of children and their ages, the temperament and background of the parents, the peace, serenity, and material security of the family, the mores of the community, the cultural heritage for unified family recreation. Opportunities for recreation are different in country and in city, in milder climates and in colder ones, in homogeneous ethnic groups and in mixed groups. In cities where public or semi-public housing projects are being developed, certain facilities are being introduced to extend the physical offerings of the family home for recreation. Thus play spaces, park plots, rooms and protected areas for nursery schools and supervised recreational activities may be cooperative parts of a cluster of homes, and homes, by the same token, become parts of the community. As housing projects multiply and become available to smaller and smaller municipalities, or even to relatively rural areas, the possibilities for deliberate planning of home units in the interest of maximum usefulness for recreation become important, and the line of division between the home "plant" and community may tend to diminish.

No such change is to be expected in the second function of the home, or rather of the family—that of providing for the purchase of recreation. In many ways the educational world has neglected commercially supplied recreation as an integral part of education for leisure. Yet it would be difficult to maintain that in actual fact the community's provision of recreational services excels or even compares with commercial offerings in extent, importance, or significance. So far the community's principal contribution has been in the form of controlling, giving surveillance to, and regulating commercially supplied recreation, chiefly for the purpose of suppressing excesses and protecting the public against incursions of vice or of unhygienic forms of recreation. A positive and cooperative program on a satisfactory scale has yet to be created.

### ***Economic Aspects of Recreation.***

The purchased recreation for children which may come out of the family budget includes such items as the cost of a pleasure car, of radio, movie, and theater, of magazine and book reading, of toys, games, and sporting goods, and of a certain amount of vacation travel. Some interesting data have become available in recent years on the nature and extent of expenditures for recreation by families in the United States. In 1935-36, the year

covered by the consumer-purchases study, approximately \$1,643,000,000 was spent in this country for recreation.<sup>1</sup> This is 3.3 percent of all consumption expenditures—\$3.30 out of every \$100. To this should be added at least two other classes of expenditure: Reading, which accounted for \$551,000,000, and automobile expenditures (exclusive of transportation for going to work), which accounted for an additional \$3,781,000,000. It is impossible to calculate with any pretense of accuracy what portion of the automobile expenditure is *not* used for recreational purposes. The trade designation of “pleasure car” supports the general public opinion that this is the chief function of the automobile when not specifically used for business. Thus the total recreation expenditure in 1935–36 amounted to \$5,975,000,000, or 12 percent of the entire consumer expenditure for the year studied.<sup>2</sup> We are not concerned here with the automobile and recreation industries as such but with the function of the family as a purchaser of recreation; and we are concerned with the possibility that, if unable to afford these purchases the family and its children may be deprived of important cultural and educational resources. This is especially true, as recreation is likely to be regarded as dispensable,<sup>3</sup> when compared with food, clothing, and similar necessities. It is important therefore to see how persons and families in different income groups fared in expenditures for recreation and whether relatively serious deprivation in this respect is involved for families of low income. The following figures reflect the respective degrees of success attained by the lower, middle, and upper thirds of our population, classified by income level, in obtaining purchasable recreation.

For all “families” (1 or more persons) the average annual expenditure was \$1,502.<sup>4</sup> Of this amount the leisure-time items account for a little over 10 percent, divided as follows:

For automobile . . . . .	\$96
For recreation . . . . .	42
For reading . . . . .	14
<hr/>	
Total leisure-time expenditure per family . . . . .	\$152

<sup>1</sup> Among the many items included in the recreation category are: Paid admissions to movies, ball games and other spectator sports, fairs, circuses, dances, and amusement parks; equipment, supplies, fees and other costs for games and sports; purchase of radios and other musical instruments and supplies; photographic supplies; children's toys and play equipment; pets; entertaining (exclusive of food cost); dues to social and recreational clubs; gambling losses; and expenditures for hobbies and collections. Excluded are expenditures for sports clothing and for lodging, transportation, and food while on vacation or pleasure trips; excluded also are items such as tobacco, personal care (haircuts, manicures, cosmetics), and educational items. (*Consumer Expenditures in the United States*, pp. 26, 46; National Resources Committee, Washington, 1939.)

<sup>2</sup> Some information is recorded on the proportions of these expenditures that were made by families and by single individuals, respectively (*Consumer Expenditures in the United States*, table 7, p. 46). Family units spent 88.7 percent of the total automobile expenditure, or \$3,354,000,000; 74 percent of the total “recreation” expenditure, or \$1,216,000,000; and 70.4 percent of the total expenditure for reading, or \$385,000,000. Thus, family units spent a total of \$4,955,000,000 out of the \$5,975,000,000 referred to above, or an average per family unit of \$168.

<sup>3</sup> Although few people really believe that such items as cigarettes, newspapers, and possibly movies will not be purchased until adequate food, rent, and clothing for the whole family have been purchased.

<sup>4</sup> *Consumer Expenditures in the United States*, table 5 (p. 36).

A "family", however, may be anything from a single person to 10 or more persons, and therefore this figure is somewhat misleading. The per capita expenditure is calculated at \$47 <sup>5</sup> per annum, but this figure is exceedingly unrealistic. The differences in expenditure among the several income groups tell a truer story of available leisure-time resources. The lowest of the three income groups, for example, made up of more than 13 million families, averaged \$31 per annum for all three items. The relative position of the several groups can be seen in the following table:

**Table 6.—Average expenditures for all items and for certain leisure-time items of each third of the Nation's families classified according to income level, 1935-36 <sup>1</sup>**

Income level	Average expenditure per family				
	All items	Leisure-time items			
		Total	Recreation	Reading	Automobile
All levels . . . . .	\$1,502	\$152	\$42	\$14	\$96
Under \$780 (lower third) . . . . .	471	31	9	6	16
\$780-\$1,450 (middle third) . . . . .	1, 076	97	28	12	57
\$1,450 and over (upper third) . . . . .	2, 959	327	89	23	215

<sup>1</sup> *Consumer Expenditures in the United States*, tables 5 and 6 (pp. 36, 40). Includes single individuals and families of 2 or more persons. The average number of persons per family was 3.9 for all families, 2.9 for families in the lower third, 3.2 in the middle third, and 3.5 in the upper third.

Yet even these figures tell only part of the story. The ability to purchase leisure-time commodities naturally increases with accelerated velocity in the upper-income groups, and the consuming capacity or desire for recreation is clearly reflected in the mounting averages for leisure-time expenditures as income rises beyond the lowest levels. The extraordinary opportunity afforded to throw light on these relative expenditures justifies the reproduction in some detail of a few of the data offered on the subject. Table 6 and chart 29 therefore deserve attentive scrutiny.

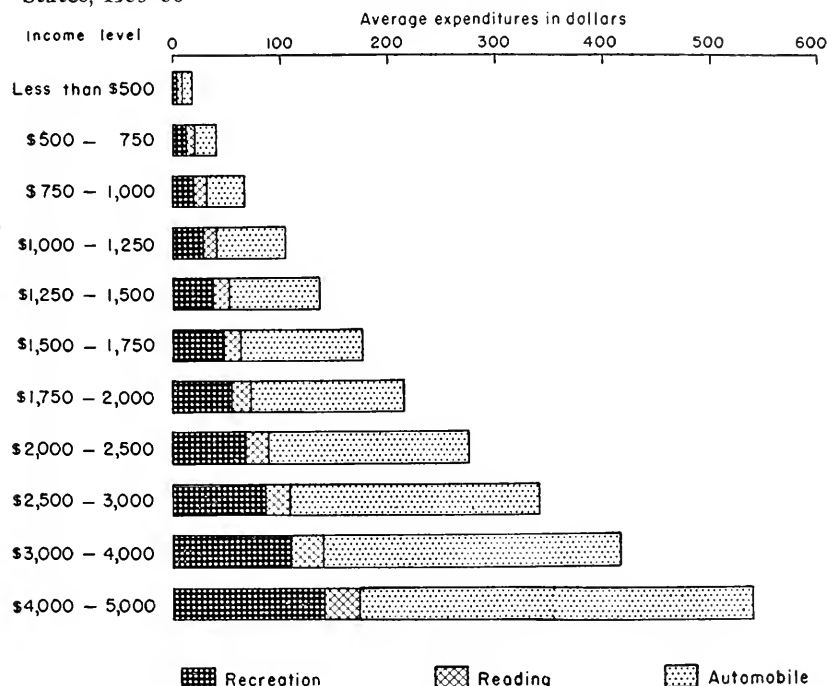
These figures, of course, are to be used with caution. In the first place they include single individuals as well as family units. Moreover, they are *averages*, not actual data. In other words, some families may spend no money at all for these purposes, and others may far exceed the average of their group. But, withal, the statistical picture as it stands is enormously significant, especially in view of the well-known fact that the largest numbers of children are to be found in families with low incomes.

We see, then, that the persons and families who are in the lower third income group (under \$780) spend for leisure-time interests—and we must assume can afford to spend—only one-tenth as much as those in the upper

<sup>5</sup> \$30 for automobile, \$13 for "recreation," \$4 for reading.

third, even though the latter group starts at the low income level of \$1,450 a year. When the groups are broken up into smaller units, the contrast becomes extreme indeed—an average expenditure by one group of nearly 160 times that of another, and so on. Indeed, the cost of common forms of recreation is so great that the “maintenance level” of expenditure, which has been used as a guide in gauging the economic welfare of American families in the present study, does not allow, out of the \$1,261 per annum

Chart 29.—Average expenditures of families and single individuals for specified leisure-time activities, by income levels under \$5,000; United States, 1935–36<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *Consumer Expenditures in the United States* (National Resources Committee).

for the 4-member family, any sums for automobiles, and only \$75.18 for all recreation, which includes tobacco, newspapers, and organization memberships as well;<sup>6</sup> and this income level of \$1,261 exceeded in 1935 that of half the population.

### Commercial Recreation.

In discussing these recreation opportunities, it is of the first importance to recognize the place of commercially offered recreation—its extent and

<sup>6</sup> *Intercity Differences in Costs of Living in March 1935, 59 Cities*, by Margaret Loomis Stecker, pp. 81–85. Works Progress Administration Research Monograph XII. Washington, 1937.

principal characteristics—in the scheme of leisure-time facilities. It is well to remember that the purchase of recreation depends on the size of income and on the margin of funds beyond what is needed for essentials, as well as on the existence of recreational resources.

*Radio.*—The most widely distributed and, in a sense, the cheapest source of commercial recreation for young and old and for the family as a whole is the radio. Some 27,500,000, or roughly 85 percent, of the homes in the United States have radios; more than a quarter of them have more than one set and nearly 6,000,000 more sets are in automobiles.<sup>7</sup> Although unevenly distributed, even in the region least favored economically—the Southeast—60 percent of the homes have radios, and in several regions the percentage reaches 92 or more. With respect to this “purchasable” recreation at least, the rural homes hold up relatively well in comparison with urban homes. As the programs are almost “as free as the air” once the instrument has been installed, this source of recreation reflects less than others the disadvantaged status of low-income groups.

Credible estimates, based on detailed studies, indicate that on an average not less than 1 hour a day (by some estimates, 4 hours)<sup>8</sup> is spent in listening to the radio by those having one in the home,<sup>9</sup> and that most of the programs receiving this attention are chosen clearly for recreation.<sup>10</sup> General family experience testifies to the effect that children devote more time to radio than do youth and adults. In the youth study in New York City listening to radio is recorded as being among the four types of recreation engaged in by the largest number of persons (92 percent of those interviewed).<sup>11</sup> The radio, it is true, performs many functions other than recreation. It is of no importance, however, for our immediate purpose to pass judgment upon its relative merits as an educational instrument, as a source of news, as a forum, or as a sales promoter. It plays an indisputably high role as a source of recreation for young and old; it is one entirely dependent upon expenditures from the family budget for initial outlay; it is a relatively inexpensive form of leisure-time activity, after the first investment; and as a recreation “commodity” it is unique in its relatively equal availability to all economic groups, to many geographic regions, to city and country.

*Motion pictures.*—It would serve no useful purpose to labor the point that motion pictures have become the leading indoor spectator type of recrea-

<sup>7</sup> *Electrical and Radio World Trade News*, Vol. 11, No. 11 (April 15, 1939), pp. 7–11. U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> *The Youth of New York City*, by Nettie Pauline McGill and Ellen Nathalie Matthews, pp. 300–305. Macmillan Co., New York, 1940. This is a study of a 1-percent sample of the population of New York City 16–24 years of age in 1935, which was carried out by the Research Bureau of the Welfare Council of New York City with the assistance of State and city work-relief authorities and the Works Progress Administration.

<sup>10</sup> Regents' Inquiry Into the Character and Cost of Public Education in the State of New York: *Education for Citizenship*, p. 80. McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., New York, 1938.

<sup>11</sup> *The Youth of New York City*, pp. 222, 224.

tion of our day. Its uses other than as a means of recreation are minor and unimportant. The motion-picture industry is a great one, and despite the slump that was induced by the depression it is still a sufficiently large source of profit to producer, distributor, and local entrepreneur that its extension and development may be left safely to the profit motive and to the cultural interest of creative artists even where profits may be uncertain. "Movies" will be shown wherever a living may be made or profit may be gained from showing them, or where educational interest invites them. It is natural, since commercial solvency depends upon attendance, that larger cities are better provided than smaller communities. It was reported in 1939 that less than half of the 13,433 incorporated towns of 2,500 population or less had motion-picture theaters, whereas no city of 100,000 or more was without at least one.<sup>12</sup> Unlike the radio it cannot be enjoyed in the home, and so farm family and farm child must go to the nearby community to enjoy it. This is, on the whole, a great advantage, for it helps draw together town and country and diminishes the isolation of the farmer. The movie lends itself to enjoyment by the family as a whole, as does the radio, and, although the young may be more "movie minded" than the old, the difference in its appeal to different age groups is not too great. It is less divisive by far than most present-day forms of recreation. This is especially true in the isolated countryside, where the family automobile must convey the entire household to the performance.

The extent to which the family or its children may have access to the movies depends almost entirely on the availability of funds. It is almost wholly a problem of income. It is, perhaps, more than any other item of recreation—except tobacco for adults and the spectator sports in general—a "purchasable" recreational commodity. Its availability becomes chiefly a matter of household economics. So far as quality and content of the movies go, they are part of the larger question of cultural levels, public education, artistic progress, and social control. As the movie is a purchasable commodity, however, a certain amount of consumer guidance by community or civic agencies may be practicable, and to that extent it may be possible to work out plans for this as for guidance in the fields of art, literature, the drama, and music.

*Reading.*—The \$551,000,000 reported earlier as the amount expended for reading in this country in a year (1935–36) is, of course, a severe understatement of the amount and importance of reading as a form of recreation. In the New York City youth study reading stood first among the forms of recreation engaged in by young men and women; it was far ahead of athletics, swimming, dancing, and the like. After reading came movies, radio, and "visiting," in the order named. The maintenance of hundreds of public libraries throughout the country and the support of countless

<sup>12</sup> *Motion Pictures Abroad*, MP-1, Vol. 13, No. S-2 (January 15, 1939), p. 6. U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington. Data are given on the distribution of theaters as related to the 1930 census.

lending libraries that have become a flourishing business and have spread into department stores, drug stores, newsstands, and other commercial enterprises are part of the "reading" expenditure in the United States. Reading as recreation may be regarded as falling in two categories: One, the purchased kind—by purchase or rental—which comes out of the family budget and therefore is subject to the economic problems of family life; and the other, the public kind, which is provided by the community through public library and school library. This form of recreation permits expansion through both home budgets and community budgets, through both private enterprise and public service. It offers fewer obstacles to equitable distribution between urban and rural populations than do movies and organized play and can combine with least difficulty recreational and educational objectives.

Reading, of course, does not mean reading only serious books or the best novels. Magazines and newspapers are equally important and no less common—in fact indications are that they loom larger in the adult's reading than do books.<sup>13</sup> Comic strips, "funny" magazines, and picture magazines are important parts of "reading" for young and old and are purely recreational—but for that very reason they are in the deeper sense truly important in their educational influence.

*Other commercial recreation.*—The miscellaneous forms of recreation that money will buy are almost without number. They are part of the basic economic life. Their production is part of "business" and their consumption is part of the living standard. Like other consumer products, recreation has required a degree of public control, legislative and administrative. Because the availability of commercially supplied recreation and because its quality and its suitability to different age groups are important to the welfare of the child, the family budget should allow for items of recreation as a "necessity." Because the amounts available for recreation, especially in low-income families, are bound to be extremely limited, it is desirable that, in addition to public control and supervision of commercially provided recreation, some guidance be given to families in choosing the kind of recreation, so that a little money may go far and may purchase "the best bargain."

It is worth repeating that some of the most important items of recreation—items as important for the child as for the adult—are bound to remain within the category of items to be purchased and are a legitimate charge against the family budget. Some statistics were cited a few pages back to show the amounts expended in this way for recreation and the range of expenditures in different income groups. More light is needed, however, on the way in which recreation enters into the family budget. A study by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1934–36 provides illuminating infor-

<sup>13</sup> *The Youth of New York City*, p. 276 and following pages.



mation on the expenditures of nearly 15,000 families (white and Negro) in 42 cities.<sup>14</sup> The average 12-month expenditure of these families was \$1,512; of this amount \$87 went for automobiles (purchase and maintenance) and \$82 for "recreation"—together, 11.2 percent of the total. In this study, as in that reported by the National Resources Committee (pp. 194-197), a further classification by income was made—in this study by per capita "unit expenditures," not by gross family income. Even the lowest-income group by this classification—one in which families averaged 6.49 persons and spent \$947 for the year, which means that the pressure for food, fuel, shelter, and clothing must have been great—records \$50, or 5 percent of the total expenditure, for the two items, automobile and "recreation." From this low figure the expenditure rises to 22 percent of the total, or \$441 and \$173, respectively, for automobile and recreation for families with an average of \$2,759 annual income and 2 persons per family.

There is a suggestion in these figures that the sort of moralistic or formalized attitude on recreation that still characterizes the approach of many public and private social agencies is unrealistic, and therefore of little value in practical planning. Studies in living costs and standards amply support the general impression that in practice recreation is treated as a necessity, and that families in even the lowest-income groups assign a substantial part of their incomes to it.

In the light of facts such as these, public and private leisure-time agencies in every community—youth organizations, schools, park authorities, municipal recreation departments, settlement houses, libraries, museums, recreation committees of civic and social organizations, churches, adult-education councils, councils of social agencies, and camping and hiking groups—would profit by reconsidering their attitude toward various kinds of commercial recreation. To ignore customs and folkways which happen to run counter to conventional agency sanctions, to criticize indiscriminately motion pictures, radio, and "pulp" magazines, to direct programs solely to protect children or to compete with commercial amusements constitute a negative and repressive program and one without practical reality. A positive policy, in which sustained and systematic effort is made to assist all consumers in their choice of play and leisure activities is likely to be more rewarding. There should be collaboration between the entertainment industries and those agencies interested in leisure-time services for the provision of programs, from whatever source, that will contribute to the recreational development of children.

To this end it might be useful to establish information services for families on cost, quality, and recreational value of recreation goods, services, and

<sup>14</sup> Income, Family Size, and the Economic Level of the Family. *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (January 1940), pp. 115-146. This article is the second in a series based on data from a study of money disbursements of families of wage earners and clerical workers. The first article, *Expenditure Habits of Wage Earners and Clerical Workers*, was published in *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 49, No. 6 (December 1939).

programs, as a cooperative undertaking by existing leisure-time service agencies. This information service should be an integral part of the program of the cooperating agencies, should stress items of interest to various age groups, and should cover roughly the following fields:

Current motion pictures, radio programs on all networks, magazines, books, periodicals, lectures, concerts, plays, art exhibits.

Standards for selecting toys for children; information on inexpensive game equipment for home use.

Places of interest to visit afternoons, evenings, holidays; low-cost vacation spots for weekends and holidays; interesting drives and excursions, picnic spots, trails, nature museums, sports areas, nature activities.

Location and programs of community centers, sports areas, nursery schools, children's play centers, parent-education classes, workshops, youth groups, community festivals and play days, settlement houses, education and recreation centers.

Active assistance by existing recreation and leisure-time service agencies might be given to:

Formation of groups for listening to radio programs and discussing movies; also formation of committees of parents to advise with motion picture, radio, and other commercial operators.

Directing children and parents to public libraries and inexpensive juvenile-book departments; encouraging the public library to establish "browsing libraries" in recreation centers, and the establishment of "toy-lending libraries."

Formation of and leadership assistance to volunteer groups who undertake some responsibility in supplying information to the central service. The participation of young people is particularly desirable.

### *Recreation Through Community Agencies*

There are two reasons why we must look to the community for a large share of the recreational facilities required for children as well as for adults. One is that by no stretch of the imagination can one expect the incomes of most American families to be large enough to afford a reasonable amount of the purchasable, commercially provided recreation, including not only radio, motion pictures, and reading, but also camping, travel, sports, music, dancing, parties, and the scores of other recreational amenities that American taste and habits provide for the more comfortable economic levels. The other reason is that some of the most important types of recreation are to all intents and purposes not purchasable, or even that they derive their recreational characteristics from the fact that they have "community" characteristics. These two motives have brought about considerable com-

munity facilities for recreation. But neither in facilities nor in activities is there necessarily a difference between the services intended primarily to meet budget deficiencies in low-income groups for purchasing recreation and those intended to create civic and community values designed for the entire public.

The handicaps imposed by inability to purchase recreation, including such space as goes with dwellings in prosperous neighborhoods, became obvious in urban centers long before they were felt in the countryside. Private agencies came into being in cities in order to provide recreational facilities for children of low-income families; in many cases agencies added this to other functions already exercised by them, as in the case of churches; and in many instances older age groups were also served. Settlement houses and boys' clubs are outstanding examples of these agencies. To some extent, because nonprofit organization permitted low fees, "Y's," Scouts, and similar organizations have served a like purpose.

These recreational facilities provided by private agencies in cities were intended to benefit primarily the low-income groups, because they were particularly lacking in opportunities of this kind. Although all ages received some of the advantages thus afforded, the chief beneficiaries, especially in settlements and boys' clubs, have been children of school age, particularly children in the more congested urban areas. The blessings of these early recreational offerings can hardly be exaggerated. Values of a very different order have also arisen in the years during which this service has been provided by leaders in private agencies. Consecutive studies were made in the theory and practice of play, in the educational values and the technical phases of play management and group activity. They helped discover the educational possibilities of play experience and of craftsmanship. They helped to popularize the arts and to afford artistic expression to those for whom art would be avocation rather than career. From leaders in this field came much of the stimulus for the promotion and expansion of public recreational activities for young and old, indoor and outdoor, and for participant as well as spectator enjoyment. Later the inauguration and Nation-wide extension of playgrounds and public-park facilities added tax resources and public interest to the pioneering work of private agencies in supplying "purchasable" types of recreation to those who could not afford them.

In providing community-wide and community-type recreation the public bodies under local, State, and Federal governments took the lead, but they have always been supplemented by private agencies. Today services provided by these public bodies are quantitatively of vastly greater importance than those offered through private agencies, and professional leadership is no longer confined to the latter. The democratic motif inherent in publicly offered services has made these a civic activity of growing impor-

tance, and they have been strengthened and promoted by the more progressive and farseeing leaders in the field of recreation within the so-called private field as well. The distinction between public provision of the purchasable type of recreation for groups with low incomes and public provision of recreation for the whole community has lost importance. "Recreation for all" is the slogan and characteristic of the modern American program.

In practice this "recreation for all" comes in three major programs, each with special functions and characteristics, but all coalesce from the point of view of the consumer of recreation and with respect to the types of activities pursued. These programs are:

School programs for pupils.

Local community programs for child, adult, and family.

State and Federal programs, largely for the purpose of expanding and supplementing local facilities.

Underlying all three programs is the general assumption that under present conditions and in accordance with our current philosophy the responsibility for providing recreation facilities and services is clearly a public one. Accordingly permanent public organization for administering these services is essential.

### ***Recreation in Schools.***

The place of recreation in the school system requires little discussion here. It is recognized by educators as a cardinal element of the school curriculum. It is practiced as the almost total curricular content for education in nursery school and kindergarten; later it is integrated in the school day as a necessary form of relaxation, demanded by child psychology so as to make possible attention to other parts of the curriculum; it serves for physical education and hygiene; it is cultivated as a socializing instrument for group life and loyalties; it carries a large load as a cultural vehicle for music and dramatics; in the more progressive systems training for leisure-time activities is an integral part of the educational goal. Naturally the functions of recreation have been abused at times and in some places. Competitive athletics have become an evil in many American schools. But in the main the positive functions of recreation hold an important place in the program of the modern school.

Building and plants in the modern American school are now devised with as much concern for recreation as for academic needs. Few new school buildings have been erected in recent years without consideration of these needs. Minimum standards have been set, and the tendency is to exceed rather than to approximate them. This development is especially noticeable in high schools, partly because their phenomenal expansion is a relatively recent occurrence, partly because at high-school age the place

used for recreational activities tends to be removed from the home, and partly because facilities so provided are more easily utilized for general community purposes.

The development of an ever richer and educationally more significant place in school curriculum and school plant for recreational activities emphasizes certain characteristics of this phase of leisure-time activity; it is "purchased" not through the family budget but through the community budget, that is, the tax system; it draws into common activity all the children of the community, helps break down class distinctions, and tends to equalize the discrepancies created by divergent economic capacities of the families; it creates a meeting ground for the parents of the children and helps to prepare children, and parents as well, for the democratic habits and activities hoped for by the educator. The schools are well started on their use of recreation as an educational instrument, as a valid end in itself, and as a democratizing instrument in American life. It helps establish socializing values by the side of constructive individualism.

### **Local Community Programs.**

The *local* element in community programs is desired not primarily for theoretical reasons; it is the inevitable condition of having any program at all. People, especially children, must have recreation where they are, where they can have reasonably easy access to it. This is at least as important as the question of where control or financial resources abide. It is, indeed, increasingly clear that financial support must in many respects be diffused beyond local units, if local facilities are to be made possible. Insofar as the schools are an important recreational resource we have already recognized the need for State and even Federal aid for its proper functioning; the direct provision of State and Federal parks and recreation grounds tells the same story, and it is repeated again in the case of libraries.

The younger the child, the more *local* the recreational facilities must be. For this reason any community program of recreation in the service of the youngest must be routed through the homes. It must start with what may be done by way of improved housing, especially in cities, as farm and small rural community more easily provide adequate space under immediate parental supervision than do crowded city streets. Perhaps for this reason the comparative lack of nursery schools and kindergartens in rural areas is not nearly so serious as their inadequate provision in urban school systems. For this reason also the growing system of public housing projects takes on a direct importance for recreation. Housing plans may make or mar play-space provision for tens of thousands of young children. It is important not only that these plans provide space within the structure and area, but that, as part of the planning of housing projects, their sponsors enter into appropriate cooperative agreements with local community authorities at the very outset. Recreational facilities on established stand-

ards should be available to the prospective occupants of housing projects and to the neighborhood of which they form a part.

The development of local public recreation facilities has been somewhat haphazard, responding roughly to the rate of educational pressure and to the growth of public opinion as a whole. This educational pressure has proceeded from several sources, but fortunately in the same general direction. The expanding recognition of the proper place of recreation in school programs has made for enlarged play space around schools, for school libraries, for encouragement of the use of museums, and so forth. The availability of increased play space, auditoriums, gymnasiums, and athletic fields in school plants gave impetus to the use of these plants for community purposes, and "wider use of school plants" became a powerful slogan for enlarged public use of school recreational facilities. In 1898 the first instance of the generous use of school plant for community-center purposes took place in the city of New York.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile the movement for consolidated schools in rural areas coincided in large part also with the movement for bringing school and community together and resulted in the addition to the local resources for public recreation of new buildings and grounds, planned increasingly to meet this wider need. More and more, therefore, better recreational planning for schools has come to mean richer facilities for the community, and the enrichment of school recreation has come to be a partial measure of the growth of public recreation. The number of actual plants or places where this growth has taken place is of course difficult to ascertain, for it may be a school district in a rural county or a school building in a metropolis; both run to many thousands. The greatest significance of this expansion lies in the fact that the primary beneficiaries of the community use of school facilities are the children themselves, to whom the school plant thus opens up play opportunity after school hours, by giving them first the physical resources and gradually, as public education proceeds, the personnel and leadership from the educational field.

Most of the discussion in the field of public recreation centers of course around playgrounds, playfields, and public parks, and these are usually found in incorporated places, cities, villages, or boroughs. The past decade or two has seen enormous progress in the creation of these play facilities despite the depression, even without counting the projects and personnel contributed by the W. P. A.<sup>16</sup>

Progress is most notable, perhaps, in the increase of public-park acreage in municipalities. A gain of 49 percent is recorded for the 10-year period

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<sup>15</sup>*Introduction to Community Recreation*, by George D. Butler, p. 59. Prepared for the National Recreation Association. McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., New York, 1940.

<sup>16</sup> For a record of progress see yearbooks published by the National Recreation Association; also, *Introduction to Community Recreation*.

1925 to 1935 for 655 identical cities.<sup>17</sup> This is particularly gratifying in that the increase was greatest in the smaller communities, where provisions have been least adequate, and active interest least well developed. Large programs such as those created in Chicago and New York in recent years and the earlier ones in Minneapolis are far from characteristic of urban communities as a whole. Part of these more recent extensions represent W. P. A. construction projects. Few of them, however, could have been obtained without local interest, and the partnership between local and central governments has itself become an established way of providing public services over a wide range of interests.

From the standpoint of children's recreation the most important expansion of play facilities is in the direction of playgrounds and playfields. Under normal urban conditions  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres are needed to provide a well-balanced play program where the child population is around 600 children 5 to 15 years of age; 5 to 6 acres are needed to take care of the needs of 1,000 children. Ten acres are needed to provide for the facilities essential in a neighborhood playfield, part of which is usually developed as a children's playground although it is intended primarily to provide recreational activity for young people and adults.<sup>18</sup>

Although children, as members of families, may make as much use of park systems (and State and National parks) as adults, the more pressing need is for more accessible areas where the child may go unaccompanied and where professional supervision and stimulation of his activities may be obtained. A degree of integration is possible between the indoor work of community centers and the work of local playgrounds, which is not practicable in the case of large municipal and county parks, or State and National park units. Local centers, in turn, although they may be conducted by independent authorities and park systems and by private agencies, offer the greatest possibilities when they are fully articulated with administrative organization of school systems. Without minimizing the value of large park systems and out-of-town park areas, the center of importance in the immediate future is still in the relatively small, local play areas and in the coordination of school systems and playground activities.

On the whole, progress in the creation of local playgrounds has been slow. Specialists in the field consider 20 percent of the total park acreage of a municipality as the proportion properly devoted to playgrounds and playfields. The percentage reported in 1935 was about 5 percent, and little progress in the acquisition of new sites was noted.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, of

<sup>17</sup> A gain of 114 percent was reported for communities of 2,500–5,000 population and of 109 percent for those of 10,000–25,000 population; of cities reporting that have 5,000–10,000 inhabitants, one-fifth had no parks. (*Municipal and County Parks in the United States, 1935*, pp. 7–8; National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, 1937).

<sup>18</sup> *The New Play Areas; their design and equipment*, edited by George D. Butler, pp. 1–17. A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, 1938.

<sup>19</sup> *Municipal and County Parks in the United States, 1935*, pp. 9–19.

814 cities for which the number and acreage of parks was reported and classified, only 275 had children's playgrounds, and only 193 (not necessarily the same cities) had neighborhood playfields. Better progress was noted in park provisions of large acreage of a kind suitable for the activities of older youth: Golf courses, swimming centers, athletic fields. Emergency-relief funds were frequently expended for this type of facility. On the other hand, the only type of recreation facility designed chiefly if not exclusively for little children—the wading pool—apparently outstripped in rate of increase the facilities for the older group. More than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  times as many wading pools were reported for cities of 25,000 and over in 1935 as in 1925, and almost 3 times as many cities reported them.<sup>20</sup>

An important and somewhat new development, particularly interesting in view of the recent expansion of State and Federal park systems, is the tendency of municipalities to acquire park property outside city limits for use by city inhabitants. In 1935, 299 cities reported such parks, as compared with 109 in 1925-26; and the total number of such municipally owned parks reached 514, averaging 253 acres each.

### *State and National Parks.*

For youth and adults, and in many ways for the family as a whole, this going outside the city limits for space, for the enjoyment of the out-of-doors, and for suitable equipment to meet the rising standards in recreation has been a thrilling development; it has given a perspective and a quality to recreation far beyond the cost involved. It is part of the larger growth of State and National parks and recreation grounds in which leisure-time pursuits, the preservation of wildlife, the conservation of natural resources, and the building of a national culture are all interlaced. For this reason a few facts reflecting the progress of recent years are worth recording. It should not be assumed, however, that the impressive growth of these resources reflects a corresponding increase of facilities for the leisure-time needs of children. The farther away from home these parks are the less are they used, and the less do they serve the smaller child.

It is reported, for example, that State parks, although covering less than half the acreage of National parks, receive far more visitors annually than the latter. But even State parks, as was shown in a recent study,<sup>21</sup> rarely draw visitors from beyond a 25-mile radius unless they are on a main highway from a metropolitan center; exceptional inducements, such as rare scenery or swimming opportunities, are necessary to draw them from

<sup>20</sup> The 10 years, 1925-35, show for cities of 25,000 population and over a remarkable growth in outdoor theaters (from 28 to 105), in ice-skating rinks (from 403 to 1,149), in bathing beaches (from 138 to 305), in toboggan slides (from 123 to 246), and in baseball diamonds, which numbered 3,090 in 1935, an increase of 93 percent.

<sup>21</sup> *1938 Yearbook; park and recreation progress*, pp. 55-58. National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, 1939.



beyond 50 miles. Week-ends and holidays account for more than half the visitors; more than three-fourths of the patrons are 18 years of age or more; and more than half come well within the upper-third income group. In this respect, as in others, Negroes do not receive equal opportunities, especially in areas where both State and local administrations discriminate against them. These facts speak eloquently for more local parks, accessible at less cost and adapted to child needs.

With these reservations in mind, however, the benefits derived from or potentially afforded by State and National parks are important to recognize. In the first place, on the purely quantitative side, the acreage contained in these parks is far more extensive than that of all municipal parks taken together. In 1940, there were:<sup>22</sup>

In municipal recreation areas, and in 186 metropolitan park districts.....	<i>Acre</i> s 398,805
In State parks.....	3,755,985
In National parks under National Park Service.....	9,288,610

The State and National parks together contain more than 30 times the acreage of municipal recreation parks. They are to be regarded, however, not as a competing resource but as a supplementary one. Although they do not provide a service as direct as the municipal park, they are an invaluable addition. Moreover, these parks have supplied much leadership in standards for facilities, in extending the variety of facilities offered,<sup>23</sup> and above all, in creating an appreciation of service, a sense of national pride, and in giving added meaning to the concept of a democratic government for the Nation. Not least of the direct contributions to this end has been the popularization and extension of camping sites, in which both State and National governments have made notable progress in recent years.

### *Development of Recreation Facilities Through Federal Projects.*

In recreation, as in other fields of public service, the depression has been the sort of ill wind that did blow some good. Public recreation has needed two things above all: Small areas with equipment, and personnel to conduct activities. It needed these chiefly for local purposes. The W. P. A. projects (following upon the earlier C. W. A.) were the chief benefits that the depression brought to local communities in the field of recreation. Later the N. Y. A. and C. C. C. made further contributions. On the physical side some idea may be gained of the importance of W. P. A. projects from the following list of construction projects reported for the W. P. A. between July 1, 1935, and June 30, 1938:<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *Our National Resources—Facts and Problems*, p. 20. National Resources Planning Board, Washington, 1940.

<sup>23</sup> For details on extent of use of national parks, see the yearbooks of the National Park Service.

<sup>24</sup> *Community Recreation Programs; a study of W. P. A. recreation projects*, p. 20. Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, Washington, February 1940. (Processed.)

Type of facility:	<i>Number of new units</i>
Recreational buildings . . . . .	5,486
Athletic fields . . . . .	1,787
Parks . . . . .	1,607
Playgrounds . . . . .	1,594
Swimming pools . . . . .	471
Wading pools . . . . .	440
Tennis courts . . . . .	4,582
Golf courses . . . . .	143
Handball courts . . . . .	728
Horseshoe courts . . . . .	1,142
Ice-skating rinks . . . . .	1,037
Band shells . . . . .	116

These items are in addition to school buildings, community centers, stadiums, camps, armories, auditoriums, and gymnasiums, as well as large park and playground improvements through installation of roads, trails, fireplaces, picnic grounds, bridle paths, lakes, ponds, and boat basins. It would be difficult to find the community that has not benefited from this program.<sup>25</sup>

On the service side it is difficult to give correspondingly accurate data. At various times the personnel employed in conducting leisure-time activities under W. P. A. numbered more than 40,000 persons (including a proportionate number of Negroes), in addition to the regular personnel in local public agencies in communities of all sizes, in some of which this service was the only available recreation program.

Not least of the values of these projects, aside from the fact that they afford employment and income to many jobless persons—white-collar and other—lies in their contribution to the integration and coordination of the work of the several levels of government—local, State, and Federal—and of that of public and private agencies. Official statistics record thousands of agencies, both public and private, as sponsors of these projects, and, although motives and methods of cooperation have not always been of an equally high order, the large benefits are nevertheless clear and tend to be lasting. Through these Federal emergency services thousands of communities were able to offer their inhabitants public recreation for the first time, and many of them have inaugurated permanent plans for such service. An analysis of W. P. A. services in a survey conducted in February 1939<sup>26</sup> showed that more than 36,000 W. P. A. employees were in recreation work outside New York City and nearly 5,000 in New York City; 31 percent of those outside New York City worked in cities of 100,000 or more, 17 percent in cities of 25,000–100,000, and the remaining 52 percent in communities

<sup>25</sup> The yearbooks of the National Recreation Association give some data on amounts of total local expenditures for local public recreation and the portion of these derived from emergency funds; see also *Community Recreation Programs*.

<sup>26</sup> *Preliminary Survey of Selected Data on W. P. A. Recreation Projects, Week of February 12–18, 1939*. Work Projects Administration, Washington. (Mimeographed.)

of less than 25,000 population. Altogether, nearly half (7,085) of the communities in the country benefited by the program.<sup>27</sup>

In rural areas, this has represented a net addition to recreational resources and leadership, which for many years have been provided largely through the 4-H clubs, conducted by the Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.<sup>28</sup> A tremendous advance has thus been made toward the equalization of recreational opportunities for those children who are most in need of them—children living in small communities, in rural areas, and in neglected sections, and those handicapped by color, economic status, and retarded community tradition.

### The Greatest Need—Planning

Looking now to the future, what are the most practical steps in developing more and better leisure-time services for children? The needs themselves may easily be listed: The provision of opportunities and facilities for recreation in the schools as part of the curriculum and for community use after school hours; small play spaces close to homes; more attention to small communities; more funds for the purchase, equipment, and maintenance of facilities; more and better-trained personnel; more far-reaching use of group-activity techniques and of democratic procedures. Enough is known of standards in relation to these various needs to afford guidance for some time. Facts have become known, especially in the past half-dozen years, as to where the needs are greatest, the provisions most meager, the resources least adequate. What, then, are the points requiring greatest emphasis and most concentrated effort in the near future—aside from the universal need of increasing the incomes of families so that they may buy the “purchasable” leisure-time opportunities for themselves? Progress may be made most usefully on two fronts: The planning of services, and the coordination of resources of local, State, and Federal governments.

For planning it is necessary to know first what services are most important, most desired by children, and most needed; that requires utilization of information already available and the making of further studies and experiments. Second, information must be obtained on all available resources—in school systems and out, under public and private auspices. In the third place, suitable administrative machinery must be devised both for planning and for implementing plans of operation, especially by coordinating whatever resources may exist under whatever auspices. This, on the face of it, would involve both recreation authorities and local coordinative agencies. Finally, plans and their execution depend on trained personnel at the

<sup>27</sup> Even so, more than 6,000 communities—preponderantly the small ones—had at the time of this survey no permanent locally supported public programs at all.

<sup>28</sup> Reports from county agents showed that well over 1,300,000 rural young people were members of 4-H clubs in 1940—some 79,000 in number. Recreational activities for both boys and girls are included in the club programs.

administrative end, no less than in the operation of services in direct contact with children and families.

*Inquiry on Needs and Available Types of Recreation.*

As to needs and resources information is spotty and inconclusive. Records of operating agencies are of little help, for they report services, not needs; the services reported tend to cover both recreational and other kindred activities associated with leisure time, including strictly educational and health activities. Suggestions do come from studies such as those of the use of State and National park systems and the recent studies by the American Youth Commission, and from research relating to the recreational habits and preferences of children and youth. Among the more recent of these, reference has been made to the New York City youth study. This study seems to indicate, among other things, that recreational activities preferred by youth in that urban area are not necessarily those practiced by them; but whether this divergence is entirely a matter of family income or is related to availability of community resources is not always clear. For example, the first choice of both young men and young women is "travel"—about one-sixth of both groups so chose. This evidently is within the privately "purchasable" realm; and it is not surprising that in the order of actual practice travel is about thirtieth in rank of activities.<sup>29</sup>

In another phase of this study it is brought out that only a portion of the youth canvassed utilized recreation centers; about 60 percent of the young men did not.<sup>30</sup> Was this due to absence of facilities or to lack of interest? It is impossible to say, for some at least of the "most desired" forms of recreation, such as swimming, socials, reading, and athletics, might have been available at such centers, but perhaps not at the right place or for the right people. Girls, for example, used these centers far less than the young men, and Negroes less than whites. Where the use of recreation centers was recorded, more than a quarter of the youth used school centers, about the same proportion used playgrounds, courts, and so forth, 10 percent used church centers, about 10 percent settlement houses, another 7 percent, "Y's," Scouts, and so on. Are these figures a reflection of choice or of opportunity; are they peculiar to New York, or might they be country-wide; would they differ for country and for city, if opportunity were at hand? Systematic study is required if the answer is to be known, and if the answer is to be utilized for rational planning. Some of the data from the study of State and National parks have already been cited, and they leave many questions unanswered.<sup>31</sup>

There are about a quarter of a million elementary- and secondary-school buildings in the United States, although more than half are rural one-room

<sup>29</sup> *The Youth of New York City*, pp. 222, 224, 247.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 265, 320.

<sup>31</sup> Further studies by the American Youth Commission will undoubtedly add to knowledge on this subject.

school buildings. They serve some 26 million children and an unascertainable number of adults.<sup>32</sup> There were in 1935 more than 15,000 local parks (in 1,200 municipalities),<sup>33</sup> more than 800 State parks,<sup>34</sup> nearly 30 national parks, and the number of park buildings, golf courses, tourist camps, bathing beaches, skating rinks, baseball diamonds, boathouses, and so forth, almost defies statistical reporting. The count of participants arrives at figures difficult to comprehend.<sup>35</sup> Inadequate as these facilities still are in relation to need, they represent a vast quantity of service, under various and partly overlapping administrations. These facilities have been steadily increasing. Any program of leisure-time services that does not have available full information concerning these resources, their relationship, where growth is strong and where it is retarded, is obviously destined to be ineffective. Moreover, any plan for coordinated use of all these facilities can not be merely an arithmetical process of addition and division, or a mechanical articulation of municipal and State departments or of local and Federal projects. The consumer to be served is the child (or the individual, from the standpoint of larger planning). This child or person lives in some place, has certain needs and desires for recreation, and has some knowledge of what he can get but a greater ignorance of many opportunities that are actually or potentially accessible. To this person it is of little significance whether the school board, the park department, the State, National, or local government, or public or private bodies administer the activities for recreation. If he is to be well served, information should reach him, advice and guidance should be at hand, and some rational plan should be reflected in the composite resources that he may call upon for his leisure-time activities.

Possibly the first step in this direction is an orderly utilization of the considerable privately supported facilities that exist in many places, and the second, the development of a program that provides for local planning and the coordination of all accessible facilities, under whatever auspices.

### *Private Agencies as a Resource in Planning.*

Voluntary associations and organizations of many kinds for developing play and recreation programs have been in existence for a long time. Private social agencies have made and will continue to make significant contributions in leadership, resources, and programs. Recreation in the future will continue to give an important place to these and possibly to other as yet undeveloped private agencies. It is desirable if not imperative to have voluntary associations and organizations, as well as government,

<sup>32</sup> *Statistics of State School Systems, 1935-36*, pp. 53, 55. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1937, No. 2, Washington, 1938.

<sup>33</sup> *Municipal and County Parks in the United States, 1935*, p. 7.

<sup>34</sup> *Directory and Tabulation, State Parks and Related Recreational Areas in the United States, January 1, 1939*, National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>35</sup> For example, almost 144 million "participants" were reported as using "special recreation facilities" in *Municipal and County Parks in the United States, 1935* (p. 20).

concerned with ways and means of organizing and designing recreational programs for the varied interests of children and their families.

There are no exact figures on the amount and distribution of privately conducted recreation services. They are chiefly in the large and medium-sized cities. Many of them are entirely local, without outside affiliations; others are associated in Nation-wide programs. Quantitatively their work is not inconsiderable, even in comparison with the vast public resources.<sup>36</sup>

For adequate planning of all this varied and unevenly distributed service, and even more for the planning of services that do not exist and for places and neighborhoods that most need them, the two absolute requirements are: Public bodies responsible for recreation services; and arrangements by which these may be articulated one with another and with privately conducted resources.

### *The Different Levels of Government in Planning.*

*State and local government in planning.*—Public recreation authorities administering recreation services in local communities (including 25 counties) numbered 935 in 1938. Thirty-four percent administer these services as a single function; 30 percent, in conjunction with park departments; 18 percent, in conjunction with a variety of local government departments.<sup>37</sup> Home-rule statutes and State enabling legislation in all States permit localities to levy taxes for operating certain kinds of recreation programs.

In the States, forest, park, or conservation departments or commissions, State education departments, and, in some cases, State welfare departments deal variously with recreation facilities and services. The independent function of recreation is not as yet represented, however, in any State government. It is clear that both municipal and State units need some responsible public authority that will initiate and develop a program for public recreation.

Municipalities having no public recreation agency should investigate the means by which such a body may be created, to articulate the administration of recreation services of park and school and to secure the cooperation of private agencies. In a broad community recreation program it is important to utilize all local resources; this should be done throughout the year and under qualified and trained personnel. In small communities, where an independent recreation authority is not feasible, the assumption of this responsibility by schools may be most appropriate.

<sup>36</sup> To cite a few examples: The YMCA's report for 1940 more than a million and a quarter members and participants, of whom about one-third are under 18 years of age; Boys' Clubs report for 1939, 295,732 members; Boy Scouts, 1,391,831; Girl Scouts, 462,284; Camp Fire Girls, 278,451. (*Social Work Year Book, 1941*, pp. 84-90, 620-621; Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1941.) In addition to these agencies are the Y.W.C.A's, Jewish Welfare Boards, and similar agencies that number hundreds and serve hundreds of thousands of children in cities and towns.

<sup>37</sup> *Recreation (Year Book Number)*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (June 1939), pp. 130, 138-166. National Recreation Association, New York.

The recreation needs and interests of local residents cannot be adequately served by local community resources alone. They require the help of State and Federal governments. Use of highways, parks, camps, and picnic areas; joint planning between rural and urban communities; traveling art exhibits; dependence on State legislation; need of outside advisory service, of exchanging experience, and, in some cases, of obtaining financial assistance—all these call for intercommunity and wider consultation and action.

Within the State a recreation committee of the State planning board or an interdepartmental committee made up of State bureaus and departments may supply the unifying service for State-wide planning of recreation. State recreation associations might well be created in some places to study the status of recreation in the State and to propose whatever administrative plan and body may be suitable under existing conditions.

Public recreation programs could be strengthened by the establishment of some State recreation body, where such an agency does not exist, in order to facilitate planning and cooperation among the various departments of the State government, the counties and cities within the State, and the recreation services available to States and localities from departments of the Federal Government.

*The Federal Government in planning.*—It has been estimated that between 1933 and 1937 more than one billion dollars was spent by the Federal Government through the Work Projects Administration on recreation projects requested by State and local bodies such as park, forest, education, public-work, welfare, and recreation departments. Other Federal agencies that perform some type of recreational functions year in and year out are the National Park Service, Forest Service, National Youth Administration, Civilian Conservation Corps, Public Works Administration, Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture, Children's Bureau, Farm Security Administration, Bureau of Biological Survey, Office of Education, Public Health Service. Many of the recreation services of these agencies are of a temporary nature and depend for their future existence on factors outside and independent of the sphere of recreation. The programs of these agencies have made possible the participation of large numbers of children and youth in recreational activities. They also gave more than 7,000 cities and towns a demonstration of far-reaching significance in operating a broad program of public recreation, adult education, and cultural activities. More than 10,000 private agencies, public departments, and civic organizations throughout the country helped to make this demonstration possible.

The need for coordination, clearance, and joint action on the part of Federal agencies and bureaus concerned with recreation was recognized by the creation of the Technical Committee on Recreation of the Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities. The recommendation contained in the committee's report to the President in 1937, for setting up a Federal Bureau of Recreation which would serve

the field of recreation in somewhat the same manner as the United States Office of Education serves the schools, deserves careful study and consideration.

Some form of interdepartmental consultation is needed in the Federal Government to encourage State planning and coordination and to create joint advisory, research, and informational services at the Federal level. Study also needs to be given to the desirability of Federal grants-in-aid to States for the purpose of developing small professional staffs for recreational leadership in the States. The resources of the United States Children's Bureau for leadership and guidance in the development of play and recreation opportunities for children need strengthening if the wide contacts of that Bureau with agencies that serve children are to be capitalized for progress in recreation.

There is a notable trend toward correlating health education, physical education, and recreation within the school program. To bring this broadly conceived program to full and effective operation State and local authorities require assistance. The United States Office of Education might well promote the fruitful relationship of these fields and their values for child development by creating a division in that office to deal with the common problems of recreation, health education, and physical education. Such a division would give advisory services to State and local school systems and would assist them in building effective cooperative arrangements with appropriate community agencies.

#### *Qualified Leadership in Planned Recreation.*

The key to a successful play and recreation program is leadership. In some respects the type of leadership required and persons suitable for it are more difficult to discover and to prepare than in many other fields. One reason for this is the comparatively late development of play and recreation in an organized form and as a special service of general concern. The leadership of play and recreation groups requires persons of rich background and experience, sensitive to individual as well as to group needs and proficient in a variety of recreation skills. On the whole, our present equipment in physical facilities exceeds our present equipment in trained personnel to bring them to full and effective use. Standards for the selection, training, qualifications, and salaries of all types of play and recreation leaders vary according to such factors as size of community, type of agency, job responsibilities, recreation needs. But standards do exist, even though they are flexible and tentative.

The preparation of leaders in community play and recreation should be generally comparable in amount and thoroughness to that required for the profession most closely related to it, namely, public education. To achieve this standard, it will be necessary to offer compensation commensurate with the preparation desired and to employ staff members full time throughout the year.



The trend away from "agency training" programs and toward the development of professional education for personnel who are to guide recreation and informal education is a promising phenomenon that should be encouraged and recognized as an important advance. It should be developed in conformity with the theory that insofar as recreation personnel are paid by public funds they should be placed under a merit system.

At the same time special programs now under way for giving extensive recreation and community training to volunteer workers in rural areas should receive wholehearted support and encouragement. Colleges, universities, and professional schools of all types should be urged to offer general courses in the principles and methods of recreation to all students who plan to live and work in rural areas so that they may be better equipped to serve as volunteer leaders.

Organizations engaged in recreation and informal education now employing specialized and professional workers should be encouraged to develop programs of in-service training for the purpose of maintaining and developing qualified leadership.

The more specialized areas of the leisure-time field are inextricably related to the total training program. Group work is an educational process whose broad aim is to further the social adjustment of not only the individual who is part of a group but also that of the group itself. Based upon fundamental principles of psychology and human behavior, group-work techniques are directed toward the end that each individual may experience wholesome development through his experience with other individuals in a group situation. Recreation provides many of the benefits of group activity and can, by appropriate administration and guidance and the use of trained personnel, enhance the deep-set educational values of recreation and help toward the achievement of the democratic way of life.

### *Planning and Coordination in the Community.*

Recreation requires planning on a national, regional, State, and community basis. To be effective, such planning calls for the collaboration of public, private nonprofit, and commercial agencies. The needs and desires of the child and the adult as consumers of recreation are bound up in these three types of recreation agencies, which depend for their functioning on resources not confined to locality, State, or region.

Distinctions between public and private agencies in the field of recreation are becoming less important as time goes on. It is important rather to make sure that provision is made for play and recreation opportunities for the entire population and to insure cooperative and intelligent planning. A mass of important data and analyses that should be of direct use to this end may be found in the contributions of State and local planning boards whose efforts during recent years have not yet received the amount of public attention and interest that they deserve.

The importance of private agencies in recreation planning lies in the fact that they provide a medium through which groups of citizens acting voluntarily can identify, interpret, and seek to meet some specialized community need. Particularly has this been the case in relation to areas of activity which are resisted or rejected or are as yet unrecognized by the larger community. Private agencies play a vital role because they have emphasized responsibility and participation on the part of volunteers and have brought volunteer and professional leaders into creative association. Private agencies, as well as public agencies, have also contributed much of the finest social thinking and leadership to the whole field of recreation. Private agencies have often consciously prepared the community for larger public effort and the transfer of services from private to public auspices. Both public and private agencies have experimented in new areas of need and in new methods of work.

Coordination and planning among agencies providing recreation services for children and youth, such as settlements, boys' clubs, Young Men's Christian Associations, and Young Women's Christian Associations, Young Men's Hebrew Associations and Young Women's Hebrew Associations, Scouts, public libraries, parks, playgrounds, and community centers, have been undertaken rather widely through local councils of social agencies. Every city of more than 500,000 population and some 70 of the 80 cities between 100,000 and 500,000 population have such councils. Within these bodies, organizations engaged in recreation and informal education have achieved recognition and a status coordinate with other major organizations, such as those for health and family-welfare. In a goodly number of instances, however, public agencies are not adequately represented in the membership of such councils. In many cases, if not most, the activities carried on by the council are of primary interest to the private agencies and only of secondary or indirect interest to the public agencies. To some extent this might be expected, as the sources of funds for the two types of agencies, and the procedures involved in obtaining them, are quite different. But there is no reason for the continuance of this one-sided development.

Practically one-fourth of all community-chest funds are now appropriated for leisure-time services. This represents the second highest appropriation for a specialized field of service and almost approximates the highest single item. Chests and councils, as a result, are coming to have a larger stake in the performance of all agencies in this field. It would appear desirable, therefore, to extend the practice of creating within local councils of social agencies a division on recreation and informal education wherever possible, particularly in the larger cities. Such a division should be directed by professional personnel wherever possible. Its purpose should be to stimulate and help local agencies, under whatever auspices they operate, to examine the play and leisure needs of children and youth, as well as those of

other age groups, to evaluate the effectiveness of present resources, and to plan and promote a more adequate program.

In view of the tremendous energy that is being devoted to recreation planning by municipal authorities, and more recently by State and Federal bodies as well, the time is ripe for the creation of a National Commission on Recreation, not dissimilar in purpose to the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association and the Commission on Human Relations of the Progressive Education Association. Such a National Commission on Recreation should study our leisure resources and needs as a Nation and make recommendations concerning the development of recreational programs with particular regard to the needs of children and youth. The American Council on Education might well take the initiative in the creation of this Commission, and from its work should emerge a National Conference on Leisure-Time Services in a Democracy, to be held within the next few years, and to report its findings and recommendations to the American people.

## Libraries

One of the most democratic of American institutions and one of America's distinctive contributions to civilization is the free public library, maintained wholly or in large part from public funds. It is open to all readers irrespective of education, occupation, interest, citizenship, nationality,<sup>38</sup> economic status, or social condition. It serves them impartially, without censorship or bias. It recognizes the reader's right to freedom of opinion and its own function to supply material on all sides of controversial subjects.

The library is an agency both for education and for relaxation. It supplements the school system by furnishing collateral reading, by initiating children into the use of collections of books, by training them to be "technically competent" readers, by opening to them new fields of interest, by stimulating their intellectual curiosity, and by giving them access to the whole world of knowledge and culture. As they grow older it offers them aid in vocational advancement, in preparing themselves for intelligent participation in the responsibilities of citizenship and practical affairs, in continuing their self-education, in pursuing their hobbies and avocations, in developing and satisfying their cultural desires. From being merely repositories of records of events, religious and civil laws, and written literature, accessible only to the learned, libraries have developed into a popular resource for the instruction and pleasure of all. One specialized feature after another has been added, in the desire apparently to build up

<sup>38</sup> Or race, except in regions where segregation is still customary and no facilities or only inferior facilities are provided for Negroes.

"a complete service which would induce every resident to become a user of the library."<sup>39</sup>

Specialized library service for children began about 40 years ago and is now recognized to be an important function of a public library and an important social and educational influence in the life of a child. By 1937 it had developed to such an extent that the American Library Association found it advisable to create in its organization a board on library service to children and young people.

The atmosphere of the children's room in a public library is friendly and informal. The librarians are interested in the individual child, his social and economic background, his reading ability, his interests and possibilities. They help him find and learn how to use not only books that will supplement his school work but also books that will stimulate his creative abilities, cultivate his taste, enlarge his sympathies, supply deficiencies in his home environment, and develop a normal social outlook.

Libraries, like schools, have extended their specialized services for children to earlier and later age periods and to children who cannot get to the libraries in person. Collections of books are sent to children's wards of hospitals and to children's institutions. "Bookmobiles" carry the library to some children in isolated and sparsely settled regions. Comparatively recent developments are extension of this service to both younger and older persons, to preschool children and to young adults.

For preschool children, picture books with simple text and story hours are provided. This brings mothers and, occasionally, fathers to the library, where some of them get a taste for reading on their own account. Books on child care, as well as books for the children to read, are displayed for parents to look over. Courses in literature for children and adolescents are offered in some libraries; child-study groups are sponsored, in cooperation with other organizations; book lists and exhibits of materials on child study are supplied; parent-teacher rooms are maintained. One library at least is known to have a Mothers' Room, where help is given its visitors in selecting books for little children and for their own reading, and where lectures and institutes are held in child guidance and parent education. In many places parents get into the habit of coming to the librarians to ask advice on problems of their children's behavior, and are helped to get in touch with appropriate agencies.

For young adults also public libraries are beginning to recognize the need for a differentiated service, both to supplement high-school libraries or to supply their lack where there are none and to meet the needs of young people after they leave school. Young people's rooms or alcoves with specially selected collections of books in charge of specially trained librari-

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<sup>39</sup> Facts Versus Folklore, by Ralph Munn. *ALA Bulletin* (published by the American Library Association, Chicago), Vol. 34, No. 6 (June 1940), pp. 380-384. Mr. Munn thinks the time has come to scrutinize all these additions for their relative value and their place in the structure of the library.

ans have been provided in a number of public libraries in the last 10 or 15 years.

School libraries, usually maintained by school funds, are public libraries, whether administered by the school authorities or by the library board. In 1835 the State of New York authorized the establishment of school-district libraries, supported from public funds and housed in local school buildings, but by 1870 most of them had disappeared. In the present century, however, and especially in the last decade or so, school libraries have developed at a rapid rate, more rapidly than any other type. Standards for their equipment and management were adopted by the National Education Association in 1918. The principal factor in their rapid multiplication has been the shift in methods of teaching in high schools from use of a single textbook in a course to use of many books.

There are no complete statistics on school libraries, but reports for 1934-35 from about half the public schools of the country showed 27,800 centralized libraries with an aggregate stock of 28,300,000 volumes, and classroom libraries in 33,000 other schools, usually supplied by public library systems. Of the centralized school libraries only 6,500, less than one-fourth, contained 1,000 or more volumes.<sup>40</sup>

School libraries are now considered essential to good teaching and good learning. Their extracurricular functions are recognized also. They can contribute to the formation of good reading habits, they can train children to use printed materials and libraries as tools, they can develop a love of reading for recreation, they can stimulate open-minded study of current questions, and in many ways they can foster social habits and social attitudes. Individual school libraries are doing all this, but they serve only a small proportion of the children of the country. More school libraries are needed, larger and better collections of books, better quarters for them, and above all more trained librarians to administer them.

American library statistics are impressive: Nearly 16,000 libraries of the major types, containing 225 million volumes; and of public libraries alone, more than 6,000, containing 100 million volumes, with 26 million registered borrowers who take out 450 million books in a year. But half the public libraries operate on an income of not more than \$1,000 a year; nearly one-third of the population of the United States has no library service, and another third has very little.<sup>41</sup>

It is estimated that the public library supplies nearly half the total book reading of adults, and that at least three-fourths of the books read by elementary and high-school students are obtained from public or school libraries.<sup>42</sup> But 74 percent of the total rural population and 8 percent of

<sup>40</sup> *Library Service*, by Carleton B. Joeckel, p. 21. Advisory Committee on Education, Washington, 1938.

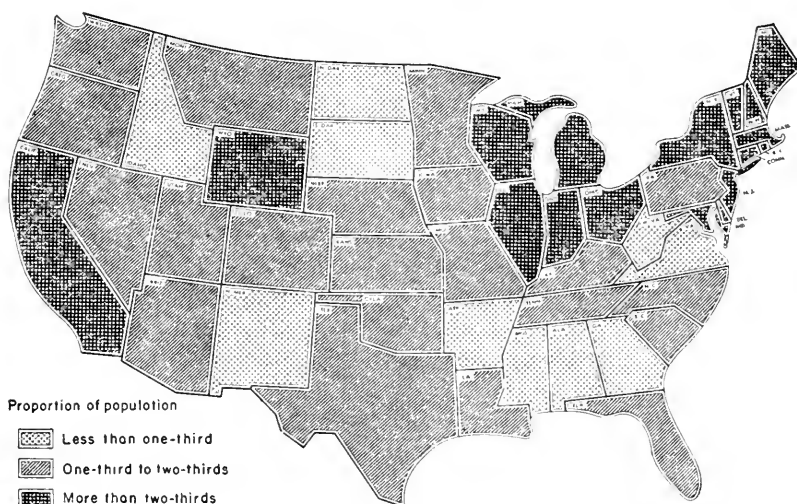
<sup>41</sup> A National Plan for Libraries as Revised and Adopted by the A. L. A. Council, December 29, 1938. *ALA Bulletin*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (February 1939), pp. 136-150.

<sup>42</sup> *Library Service*, pp. 6-32.

the urban population have no public library within reach. Geographically, the inequalities are distributed according to the usual pattern: The most generous supply of public libraries is in the Northeast and in the Far West; the poorest provision is in the South, where individual economic resources are least and where in many places public-library service is restricted to the white population (chart 30).

There is also inequality between the interests served: Scholars and students are provided for much better than the general reader, including young people not in school and children reading for recreation.

**Chart 30.—Proportion of population with library service in each State; United States, 1934<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *The Geography of Reading* (American Library Association and University of Chicago Press) and U. S. Bureau of the Census estimates of population for 1934.

As recreation, "reading" is the most common occupation of young people. Inquiries into how they spend their leisure time uniformly discover that almost all of them use some of it in reading newspapers, magazines, or books, and that reading accounts for a larger part of their leisure time than any other activity, although it may not be their preferred activity and although what they read may be of dubious value. On this point the authors of *The Youth of New York City* sum up the situation among a cross section of the city's young people, representing every part of the city and all economic and social grades of the population, by saying that "almost all the reading done is pastime reading and largely of an inferior kind."<sup>43</sup>

In a sample week about 1 out of every 100 of these young people, living in a city where reading matter of every variety and quality is accessible to everybody, did no reading of any kind; 26 percent of the young men and 17

<sup>43</sup> *The Youth of New York City*, p. 350.

percent of the girls read nothing but newspapers; only 29 percent of the men and 35 percent of the girls did any reading in books. A few (1 in 250 of the men, 1 in 200 of the girls) said they had not read anything for recreation in the entire preceding year, but more than three-fourths of each sex reported having done so often. Reading was the first choice among all recreational activities, however, of only 1.8 percent of the boys and 2.9 percent of the girls. Although almost every young person in New York City at least looks at a newspaper (in 4 cases out of 5, one of the standard papers, frequently supplemented by or supplementing a tabloid) and a great majority read magazines ("largely fiction," and that for the most part "mediocre if not inferior in quality"), hardly 1 in 3 spends any substantial part of a typical week in reading books for pleasure.<sup>44</sup>

Whatever its kind and quality may be, reading not only engages some of the leisure time of almost every young man and young woman in New York City, but also the most time of the greatest number. The amount of time during the sample week ranged as high as 35 hours. For each sex the median was 8 hours, and it rose with each educational level. Young people with the most leisure time—students on vacation and the unemployed—spent more time in reading than others, but "10 hours a week of reading for pleasure seems to represent about the saturation point for the average youth, no matter how much time he has to dispose of."

Evidently, then, libraries still have a wide scope for service to youth and to the children who will soon be youth. Libraries cannot serve youth or children or adults unless they want to be served. Use of libraries is not compulsory. But neither can children and young people enjoy the services that libraries give if there are no libraries within their reach, or if their libraries have not the funds to pay for necessary staff, books, and equipment.

Even in large cities the public libraries have been "starved" since the beginning of the depression—the years during which their services have been more needed, and needed by more people, than ever before. In many other places they have fared even worse. Many communities and a deplorably large part of the total population are still without library facilities of any sort, notwithstanding the additions made since 1934 by the Federal work programs; and there are few communities, if any, where the library officials regard as "adequate" or "satisfactory" the facilities they can provide. Nor are existing resources always used to the best advantage, because of the absence of a general scheme of distribution and coordination. "We have many libraries," it has been said, "but we do not have a coordinated library system."<sup>45</sup>

The Public Works Administration and the Work Projects Administration (and its predecessors) have made possible the erection of many new library

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 213–300.

<sup>45</sup> A National Plan for Libraries. *ALA Bulletin*, February 1939, p. 139.

buildings and the enlargement and repair of many others. Work-relief projects of W. P. A. and of the National Youth Administration have supplied professional and clerical staff to supplement personnel provided by library budgets, have reconditioned millions of volumes, have carried through large-scale undertakings of indexing and cataloguing and community surveys, and have extended library service to millions of persons who previously had none whatever.<sup>46</sup> "The chief aim of the [W. P. A.] library program \* \* \* is to reduce the number of people in the United States without library service."<sup>47</sup> State-wide projects to this end have been sponsored by 40 States and have had "a measurable degree of success" in 32. In January 1940, 160 bookmobiles were operating in 28 States and were serving an estimated population of 11 million, largely school children. These State-wide projects have given an opportunity for experiment and demonstration in new patterns of organization, particularly in the use of regional areas larger than the county, and in an increased amount of State supervision.

A plan for a national system of libraries has been made by the American Library Association Council.<sup>48</sup> It contemplates the development of a coordinated system of public libraries in each State, to serve all parts of the State and all elements of the population, with financial aid and leadership to be provided by the Federal Government.

More money, of course, will have to be spent for public libraries. A minimum of \$1 a year per inhabitant is the standard set by the American Library Association. In 1934 the only State that reached this standard was Massachusetts, which spent \$1.08 per inhabitant. The average for the United States was 37 cents. California stood next to Massachusetts, with an expenditure of 77 cents per person, and the other States followed with smaller amounts, down to 2 cents per inhabitant in Arkansas and Mississippi.<sup>49</sup> Some States can bring themselves up to the standard from their own resources. Others will need help. The national plan proposes that this help shall be supplied by Federal grants-in-aid for public libraries (including school libraries) and library service, to be allocated to the States and Territories on terms which recognize the inequalities among the States in existing facilities and in taxable resources and in such a way as to encourage State and local initiative.

Each State, according to the plan, would assume the responsibility of developing adequate library service for all its inhabitants. The State would bear part of the cost of the local library service, with the assistance of Federal grants, and would establish standards for personnel.

<sup>46</sup> *Library Service*, pp. 54-63.

<sup>47</sup> W. P. A. Library Demonstrations Serve Millions of Readers, by Edward A. Chapman. *ALA Bulletin*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (April 1940), pp. 225-231.

<sup>48</sup> A National Plan for Libraries. *ALA Bulletin*, February 1939, pp. 136-150.

<sup>49</sup> *Library Service*, p. 78.



A satisfactory State system will have the State covered with a network of regional systems, built around existing libraries as nuclei, each regional system serving a large county or several counties or a large metropolitan area, and all coordinated with one another. It will include an effective State-wide school-library service, developed either by the State library agency or by the State department of education. It will include traveling libraries to reach isolated homes and communities and other forms of extension service for the rural population. It will include special collections and personnel to serve children and young people and library materials and advisory service for parents on the subjects of child care and training. A few States already have established State library services of a high order. There is no State that has not taken some action in the direction of recognizing the importance of public libraries.

Through the Library of Congress ("now the largest library in the world and certainly one of the greatest"<sup>60</sup>) and other collections, the Federal Government now makes available to the libraries of the Nation important technical and special services. Through the creation in 1938 of a Library Service Division in the Office of Education the Federal Government recognized not only the common interests of libraries and schools but also Federal responsibility for leadership in developing a Nation-wide program of library service. Through work-relief programs it has made substantial contributions to the States in reducing the extent of territory and the number of people lacking library facilities. The educational interests of the children of America require further extension of Federal concern: Systematic financial aid to the States, according to their needs, in building up in each State a comprehensive system of general public libraries and school libraries, with such specialized services and on such patterns as are proved to be most effective.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

## Chapter X

### Employment

FOR their first 16 years children should have at most only a limited and well-guarded personal experience with "gainful employment." Their proper work consists of growing and learning. The age of 16 or 18 to about 24 or 25—earlier for some, later for others—is the time for beginning work and getting established in an occupation. Through this stage, too, children and young people need protection and help. The concern of society in the earlier period and the manifestations of its concern are of necessity directly opposite to its concern in the later period. It is the business of society to keep children out of work in their earlier years; after that, it is equally the business of society to help them get into work that will be satisfying and will give them a living.

### Reduction of Child Labor

When the National Child Labor Committee was formed in 1904 to focus and stimulate the growing public concern about children who worked for wages, about 1 child in every 5 of all the children in the country 10 to 15 years of age, inclusive, was engaged in gainful employment. How many children even younger than 10 were so employed is not known, since the Bureau of the Census took no account of the employment of those below this age. By 1930 the proportion had been reduced to 1 in 21 (chart 31), but even so the number enumerated was 667,118 gainfully employed, which did not include children under 10, nor did the census fully report the numbers of children known to be employed in industrialized agriculture, in industrial home work, and in street trades before and after school hours.<sup>1</sup> "It is a conservative estimate that more than a million children under 16 years were gainfully employed in 1930."<sup>2</sup>

Final figures based on the 1940 census are not yet available. Sufficient data, however, have been made public to indicate a marked decrease between 1930 and 1940 in the number of working children in the country,

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<sup>1</sup> See *Children in Gainful Occupations* (Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population, Vol. 5, ch. 6, Washington, 1933) and *Child Labor in the United States*, p. 14 (U. S. Bureau of the Census, Bull. 69, Washington, 1907).

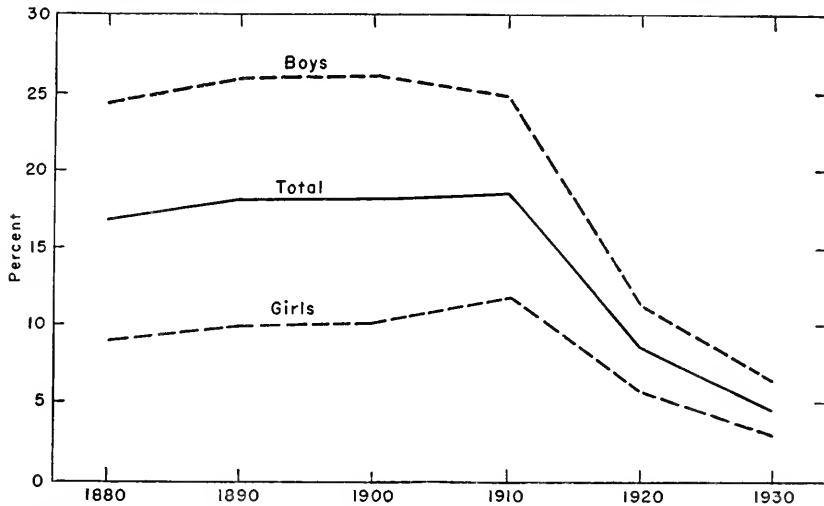
See also *Child Labor Facts, 1939-1940*, by Gertrude Folks Zimand (National Child Labor Committee Publication No. 379, New York, October 1939) and *Child Labor, Facts and Figures* (Children's Bureau Publication No. 197, Washington, 1933).

<sup>2</sup> *Child Labor Facts, 1939-1940*, p. 7.

especially in the group 14 and 15 years of age.<sup>3</sup> Even with this decrease, however, the 1940 preliminary census total for 14- and 15-year-old children in the labor force is 255,336, and for boys and girls of 16 and 17 years it mounts to 1,047,316.<sup>4</sup>

Although it is still true that many children under 16 are gainfully employed, child labor as a policy no longer has any serious defenders in theory. No man or woman in public life would now argue openly, as many did at the beginning of the century,<sup>5</sup> that American industry cannot be carried on without the work of young children or that it is cruel to deprive poor parents of the wages, however small, that their children might earn.

**Chart 31.—Percentages of boys and girls 10 to 15 years of age that were gainfully employed at each census; United States, 1880–1930<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from decennial census of population.

Probably no American now would admit holding the position, which Dr. Adler called “so un-American and so inhuman” that he was “almost ashamed” to mention it, but which nevertheless he knew had been candidly stated, that it is foolish to give certain classes of children an education and an opportunity to develop, because they are designed by God and nature to be of a lower order.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 235. In connection with this decrease, however, it must be remembered that greatly expanded production under the national-defense program in the later part of 1940 and, increasingly, in 1941 directly stimulated employment opportunities for young as well as older workers. Since the census was taken, there has been a sharp increase in the employment of young workers between 16 and 18 years of age, particularly noticeable beginning in 1941. In places where employment of children under 16 is permitted by State law a less pronounced increase in the employment of such children also is taking place.

<sup>4</sup> *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940*: Preliminary figures based on a 5-percent cross section. Children in the labor force includes both children actually at work and those seeking work.

<sup>5</sup> See early publications of the National Child Labor Committee, especially an address of Felix Adler, Chairman, at its first annual meeting. (*Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 25, No. 3, May 1905.)

Nor should it any longer be necessary to pile up evidence that it is not good for little children to spend their days tending power-driven machinery, or sorting coal on breakers, or picking cotton until the bags dragging from their shoulders get so heavy that their shoulders are pulled down, or stooping over in the blazing sun for 8 or 10 hours a day to weed beet fields or to pick berries or beans or hops, or helping in the vegetable, fruit, oyster, and shrimp canneries, or standing ankle-deep in the mud of the cranberry bogs. Their accusing, unchildlike faces and their thin misshapen bodies have confronted us from too many photographs. The consequences in disease, physical defect, mental retardation, inefficiency, and delinquency have been set forth in many carefully compiled reports. The patient work of investigators for the National Child Labor Committee and the United States Children's Bureau has produced a long series of vivid textbooks for informing the public of the basic evils of child labor.<sup>6</sup>

As to some kinds of child labor—such as that in textile mills, coal mines, glass factories, steel mills—the education of the public may be considered finished. As to other kinds, additional “courses” must be offered, or previous courses repeated. Education of the public is particularly deficient in regard to occupations in which children work as part of a family group, as on the turpentine farms of the South, in industrial home work, and in large-scale farming, where regulation involves the ticklish question of interference with parental rights; it is still deficient in regard to occupations traditionally considered to be not merely harmless but positively advantageous, such as picking berries, selling newspapers, and delivering merchandise—occupations in which the dangers are not lurid enough to make an impression on those who do not see them at close range.

Since the movement to eradicate child labor was organized on a national basis it “has virtually disappeared from some industries, notably mining and manufacturing, and has been considerably reduced in some others, such as mercantile establishments.”<sup>7</sup> This has not been accomplished entirely by improvements in child-labor and school-attendance laws and their enforcement, although steady effort has resulted in great legislative and administrative advances. The growing strength of trade unions has also contributed to the elimination of children as competitors with adults in organized fields of employment. Invention of new machinery and changes in methods of industry have tended on the whole to make employment of children less profitable. Improvements in the schools and a growing appreciation of education have lengthened the average school life and so postponed the age of starting to work.

<sup>6</sup> The camera has been one of the ablest campaigners in the children's behalf. When Lewis W. Hine began taking pictures in the cotton mills of the South in 1908, although in general he had difficulty in getting permission and frequently had to catch the children as they came out, many mill officials seemed unconscious that they had anything to conceal. “Just so you don't misrepresent conditions” was the proviso made by one superintendent.

<sup>7</sup> *Child Labor Facts, 1939-1940*, p. 4.

The amount and character of child labor are constantly changing. Since 1930 special influences have been working on the side of the children to make the changes greater than in any previous corresponding period. So many capable adults were looking for work at any wage during the depression that employers were less disposed to take on inexperienced children. Some of the emergency-relief programs have helped to keep boys and girls in school. Noteworthy advances in State child-labor legislation have been made during this decade. The N. R. A. codes<sup>8</sup> abolished child labor in many industries for nearly 2 years and continued to exercise an effect after the codes were terminated. The Public Contracts Act of 1936 set a minimum age of 16 for boys and of 18 for girls in the production of goods made under contract for the Federal Government. The Federal Sugar Act of 1937 prescribed minimum standards for employment of children by growers of sugar beets and sugarcane who wish to qualify for benefit payments. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 has in effect made illegal the work of children under 16 in establishments that produce goods for shipment in interstate or foreign commerce, by prohibiting shipment of goods from establishments where children under this age are employed.

As the worst conditions that existed in the early years of the century were eliminated new areas for concern have been discovered or have developed. As protection has been achieved for the youngest children, the needs of those a little older have demanded attention. Interest has been extended to later ages, and to educational needs of the children who are not allowed to begin work as early as formerly. Minimum standards for legislation have to be readjusted frequently, not only to meet rising standards of what is required for true protection of children but also to make use of advances in the technique of drafting laws and in devices for effective enforcement and to keep up with changes in American economic life. General standards have to be adapted to a complex variety of conditions. Uniformity of protection for all the children of America against the injuries of premature and unsuitable employment seems still far in the future.

### Approved Standards

It is now generally agreed that no child under 16 years of age should be allowed to work at any occupation during school hours, or in manufacturing, mining, or around power-driven machinery at any time; and that boys and girls of 16 and 17 should be barred categorically from all hazardous or injurious occupations. It is considered permissible for children of 14 and

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<sup>8</sup> The National Industrial Recovery Administration's "codes of fair competition," under which, as provided by the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, industries engaged in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, relieved of antitrust restrictions, were to operate during "the emergency." Among other provisions, they prohibited child labor, most of them including a 16-year age minimum. The first code was approved on July 9, 1933. On May 27, 1935, a unanimous decision of the United States Supreme Court in effect declared the act unconstitutional, rendering invalid the codes under which industries employing more than 20,000,000 persons were by that time operating.

15 to work for limited periods after school hours <sup>9</sup> and during vacation in agriculture, domestic service, street trades, and at light work in certain industrial occupations not carried on in factories, provided effective safeguards can be maintained against overexertion and other dangers.

As to amount of work there is agreement that for all persons up to the age of 18 the maximum permitted should not exceed 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week, and 6 days a week, with allowance for a lunch period, and that for all, boys as well as girls, night work should be prohibited. It is agreed also that employment certificates should be required for all persons under 18, to be issued only after the applicant has been declared by a physician under public-health or public-school authority to be physically fit for the proposed work; that minimum-wage standards should be established for minors in all the occupations in which their employment is allowed; and that workmen's compensation laws should impose double or triple compensation in cases of injury to minors employed illegally.

As no way has been found to eliminate child labor in manufacturing processes carried on in the home, even when it is illegal, and as little children are notoriously exploited wherever such work prevails, the conclusion has been reached that the only hope of completely protecting children from the abuses associated with industrial home work lies in abolishing it entirely. Its abolition is desirable on other grounds also and would benefit children indirectly in a number of ways, as the older members of the family as well as the children earn only meager amounts for long hours of toil. As a system, manufacturing in the home is economically undesirable, as it competes unfairly with factory production, and cannot be defended under modern conditions.

The best way to keep children out of work, it has long been recognized, is to keep them in school. School-attendance laws should be harmonized with the standards for child-labor laws. Attendance during 9 months of the year should be compulsory for every child up to the age of 16. An obvious prerequisite to the enforcement of attendance is that there be sufficient school accommodations and that they be accessible to every child. The fact that opportunities for suitable employment after the sixteenth birthday have been short of the demand is an additional reason why it is in the public interest to provide a suitable educational program for boys and girls of 16 and 17 and older, not only to lessen the danger of illicit employment but also to stimulate good use of years that might otherwise be spent in idleness or in a vain search for work. Furthermore, in addition to providing the educational program, it is in the public interest to give financial assistance when necessary to boys and girls over 16 who wish to continue their formal education and who give evidence that they will benefit by so doing.

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<sup>9</sup> But not before school, in the opinion of the White House Conference, because of the difficulty of preventing work before breakfast (which doctors do not approve), and the interference with needed amount of sleep.

## Status of Legislation in 1940

These minimum standards, generally accepted in principle, are only partly embodied in legislation and still less in practice. Except for the recent Federal legislation, which affects only a small part of the working children of the country, protection depends on the provisions of the statutes of the 48 States and the Territories and possessions of the United States, and the enforcement by these jurisdictions of the provisions of the statutes. Variations from the accepted standards are wide and numerous.

The Fair Labor Standards Act, effective October 24, 1938, prohibits the shipment in interstate or foreign commerce of goods made in establishments in or about which child labor, according to the definition in the act, has been employed within 30 days before the goods are shipped. Child labor is defined, with certain exceptions, as the employment of children under 16, or between the ages of 16 and 18 in occupations pronounced hazardous by the Children's Bureau, which administers these provisions of the act. If this measure is sustained by the courts<sup>10</sup> it will to a large extent eliminate child labor in factories, mills, mines, canneries, and other establishments producing goods for shipment in interstate or foreign commerce.<sup>11</sup> Its application to newsboys is limited (see pp. 236-237), and it will probably not affect many children employed in agriculture.<sup>12</sup>

It is estimated by the National Child Labor Committee that under the provisions of this act about 50,000 children under 16 years of age have been removed from industry.<sup>13</sup> The number of young persons 16 and 17 years of age removed from hazardous occupations will increase as the Children's Bureau continues to make the necessary investigations and hold the hearings that are necessary prior to the issuance of orders. Three orders<sup>14</sup> had been issued by the end of 1940, establishing, in effect, a minimum age of 18 years (1) in establishments manufacturing explosives and articles containing explosive components; (2) in the occupations of driver of motor vehicles

<sup>10</sup> Since the meeting of the White House Conference in January 1940, the constitutionality of the Fair Labor Standards Act has been upheld by the United States Supreme Court in the case of *United States v. F. W. Darby Lumber Co., et al.*, which definitely establishes the power of Congress to legislate in regard to child labor in establishments producing goods for interstate commerce. This decision specifically overruled the case of *Hammer v. Dagenhart* decided in 1918 (247 U. S. 251), in which the Federal child-labor law of 1916, based on the power of Congress to regulate interstate commerce, was declared unconstitutional.

<sup>11</sup> Child labor had been decreasing for many years in these industries. It is estimated by the National Child Labor Committee (*Child Labor Facts, 1939-1940*, p. 30) that at the time the act became effective these industries employed only about 25 percent of the children at work outside of agriculture, street trades, and domestic service.

<sup>12</sup> The child-labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act apply to children employed in agriculture only at such periods as they are legally required to attend school. The application of the act is therefore dependent upon the widely varying standards of State school-attendance laws and their administration. Furthermore, much of the work done by children in industrialized agriculture is performed during school vacation periods and is therefore not covered at all.

<sup>13</sup> *Child Labor Facts, 1939-1940*, p. 31.

<sup>14</sup> Order No. 1-29 CFR, 1939, Supp., 422.1; Order No. 2-29 CFR, 1939, Supp., 422.2; Order No. 3-FR, Vol. 5, p. 2722, August 2, 1940.

By the end of June 1941, two additional orders had been issued, namely for logging and sawmilling occupations with specified exceptions (Order No. 4-FR, Vol. 6, p. 3148, June 28, 1941), and for occupations involved in the operation of power-driven woodworking machines (Order No. 5-FR, Vol. 6, p. 3149, June 28, 1941).

and helpers on such vehicles; and (3) in all work in or about coal mines, with limited exceptions applying to certain surface occupations.

Of basic importance in the administration of these child-labor provisions is the program carried on in cooperation with State departments for making available certificates of age as a means of protecting employers from unintentional violation of the law. Certificates of age had been made available in 46 States, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia by the end of 1940.<sup>15</sup>

Federal restrictions on child labor with respect to work on two specific crops, sugar beets and sugarcane, are provided by the Federal Sugar Act of 1937. This act, which provides for quotas and for conditional benefit payments to growers of sugar beets and sugarcane, sets up certain labor standards with which such growers must comply if they are to receive benefits under the act. These standards include a minimum age of 14 years and a maximum 8-hour day for children between 14 and 16 years of age; persons who are legal owners of 40 percent or more of the crops are exempted.<sup>16</sup>

Most of the child labor in recent years has been in occupations not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Sugar Act. Protection of most of the children who need the safeguards of child-labor legislation therefore depends on State laws, which vary widely among themselves and, in most cases, from the basic standards of the Federal law. Employment of children under 16 is still legal in most States in intrastate industry, agriculture, domestic service, and street trades, and in many States boys and girls of 16 and 17 may still work under injurious conditions, in hazardous occupations, or at exploitive wages.<sup>17</sup>

The uneven protection afforded by State laws is illustrated by wide variations in the legal provisions governing child labor among the States and even among the industries or occupations in the same State. Although, by the end of 1940, 13 States<sup>18</sup> had set a basic minimum age of 16 years for the employment of children, this standard applies to factory employment at all times in only 9 States. In the States with a 14- and 15-year minimum age the actual age limitation varies because of numerous exemptions.

Of the 30 States that fix a minimum age of 14 for factory work, 13<sup>19</sup> have exemptions permitting employment at a lower age under specified conditions outside school hours or in certain types of establishments. In non-

<sup>15</sup> By the end of April 1941, certificates of age had been made available in the two remaining States and plans for working out a certification program in Alaska were under way.

<sup>16</sup> Sugar Act of 1937, Public, No. 414, 75th Cong., H. R. 7667. This legislation expires at the end of 1944.

<sup>17</sup> *Child Labor Facts, 1939-1940*, pp. 12-26.

<sup>18</sup> Connecticut, Massachusetts, Montana, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. In 1941, Florida also adopted a basic minimum age of 16.

<sup>19</sup> Arkansas, Delaware, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington.



factory employment the minimum-age standards tend to be somewhat lower in some States and to show more variations than the standards for factory work, particularly with respect to vacation and out-of-school work.<sup>20</sup>

There is little legislative restriction on child labor in agriculture or in domestic service, except as it may be exercised indirectly through requirements for school attendance. Enforcement presents intrinsic administrative difficulties, which are increased by public indifference.

In Wisconsin the Industrial Commission has power to regulate the employment of children under 16 in certain types of commercialized agriculture, and in a few other States the child-labor laws limiting hours and prohibiting night work apply, at least nominally, to agriculture and domestic service. Nebraska expressly mentions work in beet fields as one of the occupations covered. A few States require work permits for children who leave school for such employment, which sometimes is allowed at an earlier age than employment in industry. In many States school terms are shorter in the country than in the city, and standards for attendance are lower or children engaging in farm work are exempted; in general, enforcement of attendance laws in rural areas is lax. New Jersey in 1940 established a minimum age of 16 years for agricultural work during school hours and of 12 years outside school hours. It prohibits the work of nonresident children (migrants) during the hours when the schools in the district in which they temporarily reside are in session or when the schools of their State of residence would require their attendance.

Street trades are entirely free of legislative regulation in 27 States, although in some of these States they are regulated by municipal ordinance in one or more of the larger cities. Of the 21 States that have some legislation on this subject 11 States allow boys under 12 to engage in certain kinds of street trades. In many States newsboys are not covered by workmen's compensation laws on the ground that they are not employees but "independent contractors."

Protection of boys and girls of 16 and 17 who are not covered by Federal legislation is hard to summarize. State laws<sup>21</sup> set different standards according to occupation, age, and sex, and they make various exemptions. Four States<sup>22</sup> do not limit hours of work at all; 21 have regulations of hours that apply to girls but leave boys of 16 and 17 free to work any number of

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<sup>20</sup> Only 13 of the 29 States with a minimum age of 14 for nonfactory work are without any exemptions. In the remaining 16 States exemptions permit certain specified types of employment under 14 years of age at any time under special conditions, or allow children under 14 to work outside school hours. A few States have fixed no minimum age for work in stores or in service trades.

As to hours of work, only 2 States set a work week for children under 16 as low as 40 hours, and 7 States fail to set even a maximum 48-hour week for such children. Although the 8-hour day is common, 7 States allow a longer workday. Night employment of children under 16 years is regulated in all except 2 States, but the number of prohibited night hours varies. In 8 States night-work provisions extend over a period of only 7 to 10 hours.

<sup>21</sup> *Summary of State Laws Affecting Employment of Minors in Factories and Stores*. Children's Bureau, Washington, September 1940. (Processed.)

<sup>22</sup> Alabama, Florida, Iowa, and West Virginia.

hours and at any time; 23 States have some general legislative restriction on hours applying to both boys and girls, although in a number of these the limit may be as high as 10 hours a day and night work may be prohibited only after midnight. Ten States<sup>23</sup> prohibit night work, with varying degrees of completeness, for both boys and girls of 16 and 17. Twelve more have some regulation, which applies only to girls. In the other 26 States there are no limitations on night work for either boys or girls of 16 and 17, except in messenger service. Only 15 States have provisions in their workmen's compensation laws imposing higher compensation in case of injury to minors employed illegally, which has proved to be an effective device in restricting their employment.

Evidently, the protection afforded by State laws is very uneven. Legal standards as to minimum age, maximum hours, night work, and hazardous occupations vary from State to State and among occupations in the same State. Standards of enforcement vary also. Although the level of protection has risen substantially in the past generation in the country as a whole, and more or less in all parts of the country, it is far from even. There are no unduly high peaks or plateaus that call for razing, but there are numerous depressions that need to be lifted. As in other fields, a leveling-up process is what is wanted.

### Extent and Character of Child Labor in 1940

Reference has already been made (p. 227) to the preliminary figures for the decennial census of 1940 showing an estimated total of 1,302,652 boys and girls between 14 and 18 years of age in the labor force in that year. Of these, about two-thirds were reported as actually employed in non-emergency work, that is, 213,104 children of 14 and 15 years and 677,872 of 16 and 17 years. These figures represent, in general, boys and girls employed on private jobs or, to a small extent, on Government work of nonemergency character.<sup>24</sup> No data showing the industries in which these young people were employed are as yet available.

These figures do not give a complete picture of young persons at work as they take no account of employed children under 14 years of age, and, as the census was taken in the spring of the year when agricultural employment is far below its peak, they far understate the extent of child-labor in agriculture.

The amount of the decrease already noted as having occurred between 1930 and 1940 in the number of working children between 14 and 18 years of age, is indicated by a comparison between the 1940 figures for young

<sup>23</sup> Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Kansas, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, and Washington.

<sup>24</sup> There is reason to believe that the 16- and 17-year-old group includes some boys and girls who were on N. Y. A. student-work projects or in C. C. C. camps and who therefore should have been reported as emergency workers rather than as employed. However, this error was probably too small to affect seriously the total figures.

persons "in the labor force" and the 1930 figures for young persons reported as "gainful workers."<sup>25</sup> The total of 14- and 15-year-old children reported in 1940 as in the labor force (255,336) was 41 percent smaller than the total reported as gainful workers of that age in 1930; and the number 16 and 17 years old (1,047,316) was 29 percent smaller than the number of gainful workers in 1930.<sup>26</sup>

Information on child employment is also found in the accounts kept by the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance of the Social Security Board for all persons receiving taxable wages subject to the Social Security Act. On the basis of figures for a 20-percent sample of the persons earning taxable wages during 1939—the latest data available—it is estimated that 725,445 boys and girls under 18 years of age were employed in industries other than agriculture and domestic service at some time during that year. Of these young workers, 12,660 were under 14 years of age, 85,680 were 14 and 15, and the remaining 627,105 were 16 or 17 years of age.

In the entire group of young workers under 18 years of age these records show—in round numbers—208,000 in manufacturing industries (27,000 under 16); 290,000 in retail trade (39,000 under 16); 107,000 (19,000 under 16) in various service trades, for example, in restaurants, garages, filling stations, repair shops; and 120,000 (13,000 under 16) in other industries, including wholesale trade, mining, construction work, transportation, telephone and telegraph services, and finance agencies.<sup>27</sup>

About 58,000 children under 16 years of age were employed in 1939 in retail trade and service industries, other than domestic service, for whom old-age-insurance taxes were paid, either full time or outside school hours.

No figures are available from this source as to the number employed in agriculture and domestic service, which are not covered by the Social Security Act. As these industries, particularly agriculture, employ large numbers of children, their omission explains why the totals are markedly lower than those derived from the 1940 census.

Children who want to go to work because they "don't like" school or think they "ought to help out at home," or whose families think they "might as well be earning something and getting a start," are likely to be employed in the occupations that are least subject to regulation or least amenable to attempted regulation. The thousands of children under 16

<sup>25</sup> The 1940 data on "labor force" are not directly comparable with the 1930 statistics for "gainful workers" because of differences in definition. Gainful workers in 1930 were persons reported as following a gainful occupation, regardless of whether they were working or seeking work at the time of the census. The labor force is defined in the 1940 census on the basis of activity during the week of March 24–30 and includes only persons who were actually working for pay or profit in private or nonemergency government work or were assisting in a family enterprise, or who had jobs, or were on emergency work, or were seeking work during that week.

<sup>26</sup> *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940*: Preliminary figures based on a 5-percent cross section. In considering this decrease, it should be remembered that a change in the picture began in 1940 with the rising employment opportunities due to increasing defense production. See footnote 3, p. 227.

<sup>27</sup> Data compiled by the Children's Bureau from figures of the Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance, Social Security Board. The figures given include estimated shares of the group not classifiable by industry.

years of age now employed are engaged for the most part in the trade and service occupations not covered by Federal law, in street trades, and in agriculture, in all of which employment under 16 is still legal in most States.

For want of a more satisfactory term, "intrastate industrial" employment is used in current discussions to include work in bakeries, laundries, garages, repair shops, offices, theaters, bowling alleys, grocery stores, markets, butcher shops, other retail stores, hotels, restaurants, barber shops, beauty parlors, and in domestic service.

Full-time employment in these occupations for children of 14 and 15 should not be countenanced in any State, as it interferes with their education and pre-empts jobs that otherwise would be filled at higher wages by older boys and girls. Work after school, on Saturdays, or in vacations is not necessarily objectionable, but the danger is always present that the combined demands of school and employer will be too heavy for the immature organism. In some kinds of work or in any kind of work under certain conditions, there may be serious hazards. Working conditions are often very unfavorable, and wages are often microscopic.

In one State, for example, a 14-year-old boy, legally employed for the summer in a bakery, had both arms cut off by a dough-mixing machine. In another State a 13-year-old boy earned \$5 a week in his summer vacation working in a hot bakery from 8 p. m. to 4:30 a. m. for 6 nights a week. A boy of 15 was found working in a bowling alley from 5 p. m. to 2 a. m. in a State that prohibits night work for children under 16. A bright boy of 14, who would have liked to stay in school, found a job in a barber shop where he worked 50 hours a week for \$7.50. A little salesgirl was paid \$1 or \$1.50 for a week's work, according to the proprietor's profits.<sup>28</sup>

Newsboys, bootblacks, and children selling magazines, candy, chewing gum, ice cream, shoestrings, and other small articles on the street are far more numerous than the children in industrial occupations.

Children in the street trades are exposed to obvious physical dangers: To wet, cold, and burning heat; to irregular meals; to fatigue; and to traffic accidents if their alertness and agility become dulled by weariness. Some of them may be exposed also to temptations and undesirable associations. The fond American superstition that a newsboy's life is an ideal foundation for a distinguished career has little support as a general proposition.

Because of the nature of this kind of work and of its genuinely independent character in some cases and in other cases the difficulty of fixing responsibility on the employers, and because many people still think it is good for children, regulation thus far has not amounted to a great deal. Under a release issued by the Children's Bureau, newsboys are covered by the Fair

<sup>28</sup> *Child Labor Facts, 1939-1940*, pp. 10-26.

Labor Standards Act if their work requires them "to come in or about the establishment in which the newspapers are produced." No information is available as to the extent to which children come into the producing establishments for papers, but it is probable that many children distributing newspapers do not fall within the group thus covered.

Publishers of newspapers and magazines have often avoided responsibility for the children distributing their products by using contracts under which the child is treated as a contractor or merchant. One consequence of this system is that in some States newsboys crippled for life in the course of their daily rounds have been unable to get compensation. Another is that the "little merchants" often bear the full loss when customers do not pay. Wisconsin, in a law of 1937, has definitely established the status of the newsboy as an employee of the publisher or the dealer furnishing him with papers. On the other hand, North Carolina, by a law passed in the same year—which required employers to have employment certificates for all minors employed, permitted or suffered to work in any gainful occupation—provides that in cases where the relationship of employer and employee does not exist between the child and the supplier of the merchandise sold by the minor, the child's parent or guardian shall be deemed to be his employer.

A bright North Carolina boy, encouraged by his parents, who were proud of his activities although they did not need the money, began work at odd jobs when he was little more than a baby. At 10, he was selling magazines on the streets. At 14, he delivered papers from dawn every morning and worked as delivery boy in a grocery store after school. At 15, he had a serious nervous break-down. Too much work, said the doctor, not enough play.<sup>29</sup>

Agriculture employs many more children than the street trades, and of the many thousands engaged in agricultural work a substantial proportion are employed in industrialized forms of agriculture in which many of the workers are migrants. These are not children who merely do light chores and help in the fields on their home farms under the watchful protection of parents or other relatives or neighbors. The conditions under which they work are very different from those prevailing in the traditional American concept of farm life.

Child labor for wages on the farm today consists of hard and monotonous work. The children work long hours and are subject to competitive pressure under conditions that differ little in essentials from sweatshop employment in industry. Some of them work as individuals for individual farmers, but most of them work on large-scale farms, where the family is the labor unit. Some live in the locality and go home every night. Others come for the season with their families from nearby cities—the "one-crop

<sup>29</sup> *North Carolina Labor and Industry* (monthly bulletin of Department of Labor of North Carolina), Vol. IV, No. 5 (May 1937), p. 4.

migrants" who regularly move into the country each year to help with the harvesting of berries or vegetables. Others belong to the families of "year-round migrants." The children in migrant families usually have the additional hardships of poor living conditions, improper food, interruption of schooling. Frequent change of residence prevents their having any "home." Earnings of whole families are notoriously low, hardly enough to meet current expenses and rarely enough to obviate relief in the succeeding slack season. Accident hazards are frequent, especially when workers are transported in crowded trucks.

Agricultural child labor is not limited, moreover, to isolated sections of the country or to migratory labor. Large numbers of children, both resident and migratory, are used in the cultivation and harvesting of many crops. "They thin, hoe, pull, and top sugar beets; weed cabbages and other vegetables; pull, top, and tie onions, radishes, and carrots; cut and bunch asparagus; gather string beans, lima beans, peas, tomatoes, walnuts, cranberries, strawberries, and other berries; pick prunes, some other orchard fruits, and hops; chop and pick cotton. Children of agricultural laborers also work in drying sheds at such processes as cutting fruits, such as peaches, apricots, and pears."<sup>30</sup>

Many of the operations are so simple that very young children can be useful, although they are slower and less careful than older persons and get tired more quickly. The number and proportion of children under 14 are probably less than formerly, but even within the past 2 or 3 years investigators have found children under 10 working on the truck farms of New Jersey, in the strawberry fields of Arkansas and Kentucky (5 were only 6 years old and 2 were only 5), and in the cotton fields of Arkansas and South Carolina.

Hours of work in agriculture are determined by the needs of the crops rather than the needs of the workers. Many of the children work as long as their parents. When there is a rush to take advantage of good weather or to get in a crop before it spoils, the working day may be from sunup to sundown. Average long hours, moreover, often represent work spread over long seasons; and some crops require alternately work at high pressure and slack periods of work.<sup>30</sup>

Little children still work on artificial flowers and feathers; they still string beads, pull out basting threads, card snaps and buttons, make lace, and in fact help at other industrial home work wherever it goes on. Such work may seem harmless. For the first few minutes it may indeed be play. But when, as is likely to be the case, the child must keep at it for hours, repeating a simple operation thousands of times, it becomes toil. Such

<sup>30</sup> Beatrice McConnell, Director, Industrial Division of the Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, in a statement on child labor in agriculture, submitted May 27, 1940, to a subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, U. S. Senate, pursuant to S. Res. 266.

work by young children is not legal, but there seems to be no way to protect them from it short of abolishing home manufacture altogether.

Employment of children as actors and as domestic servants in private homes also presents special administrative and other problems that await further study before desirable standards can be agreed upon and practicable methods of control can be devised.<sup>31</sup>

Boys and girls of 16 and 17 in many States are free to work at any employment they can find, and more than a million of them were in the labor force of the country in 1940. According to preliminary census figures, about 680,000 were employed on nonemergency work, and almost 370,000 were seeking work or on emergency work.

Protecting young workers from dangerous conditions is still a weak spot in State child-labor legislation, although it is well known that adolescents are particularly subject to industrial accident and disease. Their hands get caught in machinery, especially when they work too long and fatigue causes their attention to wander. They get hurt in traffic while helping on trucks. They may work at night. If they work too hard or in badly ventilated surroundings, latent tubercular infection may flare up into active disease. Their earnings, moreover, in the absence of regulation, are low and tend to depress the wages of adults. There is no body of sentiment in favor of forbidding boys and girls of 16 and 17 to work, yet those who do work at those ages still need protection by society.

### Next Steps in Protection

In simple terms, the immediate program is to assure for all children the degree of protection expressed in currently accepted standards (summarized on pp. 229-230 and embodied in the recommendations of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, p. 368).

To do this involves, under present circumstances, more or less revision of the child-labor, school-attendance, and workmen's compensation laws of most of the States, and reorganization or improvement of the educational opportunities offered in most places. It involves further determination by the Children's Bureau of employments that are "hazardous" for children of 16 and 17, within the purview of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, and similar further determinations by State agencies granted this power under State laws; improvements in administrative procedures, especially those relating to the issuance of employment certificates and inspection of places where children work; and increased appropriations for the enforcement of legal standards. The program involves also further study of measures by which children employed in agriculture, the street trades, domestic service, and on the stage can be effectively protected.

<sup>31</sup> A report of a study of conditions of employment of children on the legitimate stage made by the National Child Labor Committee was published in 1941 under the title, *Children in the Theatre*. (National Child Labor Committee, New York).

Progress in all these directions involves periodic collection of fresh evidence as to the extent of child labor and the degree and kinds of injury suffered by children who work. There may be yellowed reports that describe vividly the dangers of a newsboy's life 30 or 40 years ago, or the hardships that may beset children in a tenement family that lives by industrial piece work carried on at home, or in a family that goes to the country for a "summer in the open air" picking berries and vegetables. But conditions change. Even if they were still the same, the public is skeptical—and with reason—of reports that are not up-to-date. New surveys of familiar old evils are necessary to make an impression. New evils are constantly developing as a result of the velocity of American economic life, and the old ones are appearing in new places. Research must be constantly on the alert to discover changes both in kind and in locale.

As long as progress must depend in the main on the action of 48 independent State governments, it necessarily will be slow, halting, and uneven. Efforts have been made since 1907 to hasten the process through Federal action. The first Federal child-labor laws, passed in 1916 and in 1919, were declared unconstitutional. Since 1924 an amendment to the Constitution has been before the States for ratification, which would give the Congress power "to limit, regulate, and prohibit the labor of persons under 18 years of age." Organized opposition was strong. Only 6 States ratified the amendment between 1924 and 1933. In 1933, 14 States ratified, influenced no doubt by the spectacle of the use of the cheaper child labor when millions of adults were out of work. Organized opposition was renewed, and only 8 more States had ratified by the end of 1937. In that year the validity of ratification in Kansas and in Kentucky was challenged on the grounds of prior rejection by the legislature, of rejection by more than one-fourth of the States, and of the length of time that had elapsed since the amendment was submitted to the States. On June 5, 1939, the Supreme Court of the United States by a 7 to 2 decision ruled that the amendment was still open for ratification.

When 8 more States have taken favorable action the amendment will become part of the Constitution. The Congress then will have power to regulate the employment of children in intrastate as well as interstate industries. Uniform minimum standards can be set, below which no State may fall, for the protection of every child in every State in all kinds of employment. Popular sentiment seems to be more favorable to the amendment than are the State legislatures. A Nation-wide poll conducted by the American Institute of Public Opinion in the spring of 1937 showed a majority in favor of the amendment in every State, and 76 per cent in favor of it in the country as a whole.

After a period of subnormal demand for labor, when employers have had a large supply of experienced unemployed adults to choose from, and therefore little inducement to employ children, there is danger that



sudden expansion of industry will be accompanied by an increase in the number of children going to work, whether they are really needed or not. During such a time it is especially important to hold fast to the standards that have been achieved.

## Employment for Youth

Boys and girls in the United States have always expected that when they "got through" school—at the completion of whatever period of schooling is sanctioned by the standards of their environment—they would be able to find work of some kind that would be reasonably congenial and would lead within a reasonable time to economic independence and, in the case of boys, to the ability to support a family.

For many years before the depression these expectations were frequently disappointed. Opportunities for inexperienced, untrained young people were shrinking. Trade unions and professional associations were raising requirements for membership and were limiting openings for apprentices. Chances of success in independent or family enterprises were dwindling, as a concomitant of the trend to large industries and large-scale farming. "Dead end" occupations were often the only kind open. It has long been recognized that facilities for training and guidance were inadequate. Misfits and wasted abilities were causing increasing anxiety.

As the depression progressed opportunities for employment of any kind dwindled, even in "dead end" occupations. Even young people with superior educational and personal advantages found it hard to get work. Many took jobs in monotonous, unskilled work that offered no chance for advancement. Their pay often was not enough to meet the cost of clothes and personal incidentals. Still less was it enough to allow them to share expenses at home or to have the recreation and social pleasures normal to their period of life. Their families in many cases were on relief or in serious economic straits, and on the average all of them were less able than in ordinary times to finance additional training or even to support the children of working age. Each year colleges and schools poured out thousands of fresh candidates for employment.

The ever growing accumulation of idle young people who were neither in school nor at work could not fail to excite concern. Under such conditions the natural consequences were loss of ambition, deterioration or atrophy of abilities, resentment or apathy, antisocial attitudes and behavior. The "plight of youth" was added to "hungry children" as one of the poignant problems of the depression. Numerous local surveys analyzed the "plight" and described it. Organizations with an established interest in young people called attention to the situation and did what they could to mitigate its hardships. The Federal Government established special programs. The American Council on Education in 1935 established the

American Youth Commission to make a 5-year Nation-wide study of the problems of the youth of America. Youth itself organized and became articulate in its own behalf.

Difficulties about work were put first among the problems of youth by the American Youth Commission in its reports and recommendations,<sup>34</sup> as they were also by the American Youth Congress and others. First in importance is to recognize the size of the employment problem potentially represented by this age group.

Both boys and girls make the transition from school to work rapidly (chart 32). According to 1940 census figures<sup>35</sup> the proportion of boys in the labor force—that is, employed or available for employment—rises by large jumps with each year of age, from 22 percent at 16 years of age to 66 percent at 18 and 19 years, and then to 88 percent for the group 20 to 24 years (not far below the maximum of 95 percent, reached at 30 to 34 years). The proportion of girls and women in the labor force rises from 9 percent at 16 years of age to 40 percent at 18 and 19 years, and 45 percent at 20–24 years of age. After that it begins to fall—to 35 percent for the group 25 to 29 years and steadily thereafter at each age period. A substantially larger proportion of boys than of girls are available for employment at each age, and a substantially larger number are employed.

Negro<sup>36</sup> boys under 20 are in the labor force in a considerably higher proportion than white boys, and more are employed (chart 33). At ages 20 to 24 there is little difference in the proportions of Negroes and of whites in the labor force. The proportion of Negro girls under age 20 in the labor force is somewhat higher than the proportion of white girls, and the degree of employment is greater for the Negro girls than for the white girls. At ages 20 to 24 the proportion of Negro women employed, both in relation to population and in relation to the number of persons in the labor force, is almost the same as the proportion of white women.

Farm boys are in the labor force in higher proportions than other boys at the age of 16, 17, and 18–19 years of age, but thereafter the proportions do not differ markedly; farm girls are in the labor force in about the same proportion as other girls at age 16, but thereafter in much lower proportions.

By geographic regions, the proportion of boys between 16 and 20 years of age in the labor force ranged from 55 percent in the Southern States<sup>37</sup> down to 39 percent in the Western States;<sup>38</sup> the proportion of girls of the

<sup>34</sup> See *How Fare American Youth?* by Homer P. Rainey and others (D. Appleton-Century Co., New York, 1937) and *Youth and the Future; the general report of the American Youth Commission* (American Council on Education, Washington, 1942).

<sup>35</sup> *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940*: Preliminary figures based on a 5-percent cross section.

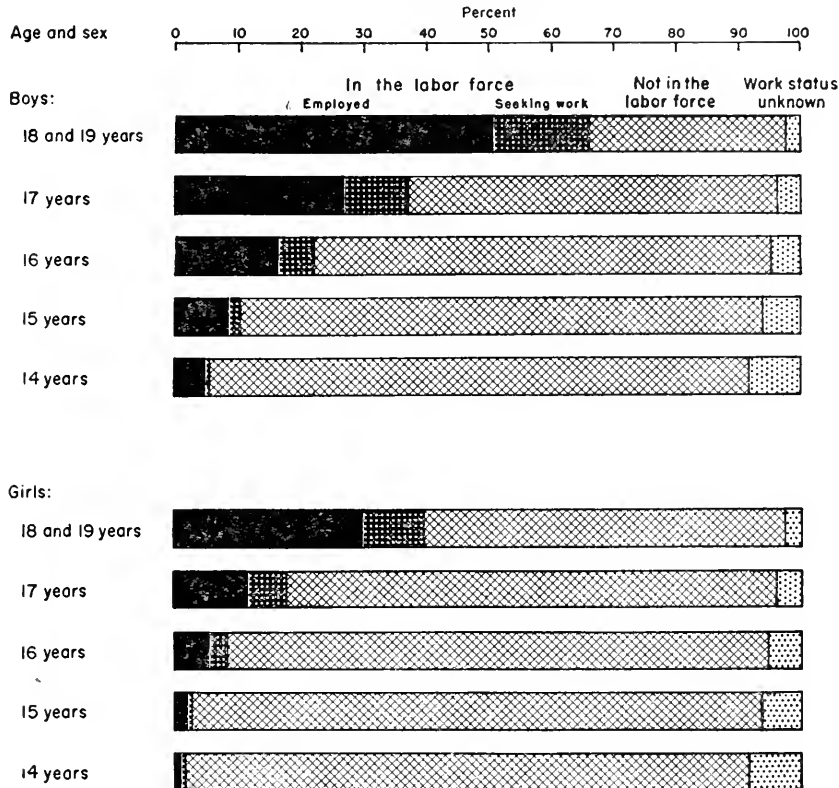
<sup>36</sup> The classifications are "white" and "nonwhite" (that is, Negro and other races), but, except in a few western areas, the second group is primarily Negro and is so designated in these discussions.

<sup>37</sup> States classified by the Bureau of the Census as the "South Region" (composed of the South Atlantic, East South Central, and West South Central geographic divisions).

<sup>38</sup> States classified by the Bureau of the Census as the "West Region" (composed of the Mountain and Pacific geographic divisions).

same ages ranged from 31 percent in the Northern States<sup>39</sup> to 20 percent in the Western States. Among young persons between 20 and 25 years of age of both sexes there was, on the whole, less difference between regions.

**Chart 32.—Percentages of boys and girls 14 to 19 years of age, by age and employment status; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>**



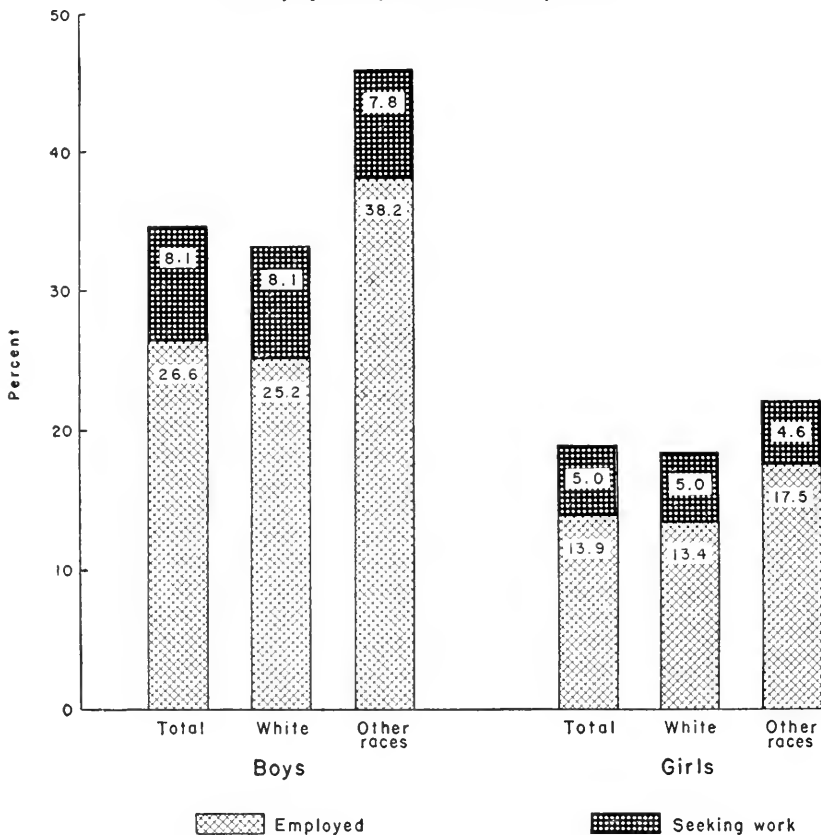
<sup>1</sup> Based on data from preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population.

Two million persons under 25 years of age in the United States were totally unemployed and seeking work at the time of the 1940 census, and the records of the Works Progress Administration, the National Youth Administration, and the Civilian Conservation Corps show that at that time there were more than a million more unemployed youth working at relief jobs.<sup>40</sup> Large as this total of approximately 3 million is, it did not

<sup>39</sup> States classified by the Bureau of the Census as the "North Region" (composed of the New England, Middle Atlantic, East North Central, and West North Central geographic divisions).

<sup>40</sup> *Sixteenth Census of the United States 1940*: Preliminary figures based on a 5-percent cross section. The earlier figure of 4 million, which had gained general circulation and acceptance, related to 1937 and was an estimate based on results of the enumerative check census covering 2,011,412 persons made in the week of November 29, 1937, as part of the National Unemployment Census of 1937, to supplement the voluntary registration earlier in the month. (See *Final Report on Total and Partial Unemployment: Vol. 4, The Enumerative Check Census*.)

Chart 33.—Percentages of boys and girls 14 to 19 years of age in the labor force, by race; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from preliminary tabulation of a 5-percent cross section of the 1940 census of population.

represent the whole problem. Many who were at work were unwillingly on part time or employed at distasteful occupations, were poorly paid, were getting no useful experience. Many who were in school were not learning what they will need.

Whether on the basis of total persons in the population or on the basis of persons in the labor force, the proportion of "youth" unwillingly idle was higher than the proportion of any of the older groups. In the youth group in 1940, the proportion not regularly employed of those who would like to be employed<sup>41</sup> was much higher for those 14 to 19 years of age than for those 20 to 24: 31 percent for the younger group, 18 percent for the older.

A much larger number of boys between 16 and 20 years of age in proportion to the population of these ages were employed in the Southern States

<sup>41</sup> Those classified as "seeking work," plus those on public emergency work.

than in the Western States (43 percent as compared with 26 percent). There was some difference in this respect also for young men between 20 and 25 years of age, the proportion ranging from 75 percent in the Southern States to 68 percent in the Northern and 69 percent in the Western States. The highest proportion of girls between 16 and 20 years of age employed was 20 percent in the Northern States; the lowest, 13 percent, was in the Western States. Among young women between 20 and 25, the proportion ranged between 31 and 32 percent in the South and West, respectively, and 44 percent in the North.

Such was the "plight" of American youth in 1940. Whether it is better, when there is not enough work to go around, to distribute what there is evenly through the age groups, whether on the whole it is worse (even for youth itself) for a disproportionate number of youth to be unemployed than for a disproportionate number of heads of families, whether it would be better for employers to discharge workers with long and satisfactory records to make room for young novices are moot questions, but they are in essence beside the point. Idleness is bad for young people, and their unwilling idleness in such numbers therefore is a serious matter for all of us. They will soon be an influential factor in the national life. Through all the rest of the twentieth century they will affect the social, economic, and political character of American life by the kinds of lives they lead and by their votes and opinions.

One way to reduce the proportion of boys and girls unemployed is to reduce the number seeking employment. Something can be done in this direction by requiring (and making possible) full-time attendance at school at least to the age of 16. Beyond the age of 16 it is not considered advisable to make attendance compulsory, because many young people of that age learn more on a job. Extension of voluntary attendance, however, can be promoted by making schools more attractive and the practical advantages of further attendance more convincing and by giving financial aid in cases where lack of money is the chief deterrent. Withdrawal of many young people from the labor market automatically accompanies improvement in economic conditions that gives work to older members of their families. More and better education before the age of 18 would eliminate many of the difficulties in later years.

Recognition by the Federal Government of the need of financial assistance in many families to enable children to stay in school beyond the age of 16 was expressed in 1939 in an amendment to the Social Security Act of 1935, which assures Federal participation with the States in the cost of extending aid to dependent children to include those between 16 and 18 years of age if they are regularly attending school.

Vocational training for employments that will offer a demand for labor, guidance in choosing an occupation to prepare for, financial assistance if necessary while preparing, and help in finding employment when prepared,

are obvious needs of young people at all times, to which the economic conditions of the past decade have attracted fresh attention.

It is generally realized that school programs for older age groups, as they now exist, fail to hold the interest of many of the young people. They should be thoroughly reorganized to meet the cultural and vocational needs of a large proportion of them. A broader conception of vocational preparation is particularly important. Training for specific skilled jobs is only part of a suitable program. The vast majority of jobs nowadays do not require it. There were in 1940 relatively fewer opportunities than formerly in both skilled and unskilled employment, and more in semiskilled occupations and the service trades. Adaptability is more useful than a high degree of proficiency in one process. A general training in essential elements that will be of use in a variety of occupations is what is needed, together with training in good work habits and work relationships and an introduction to basic understanding of social and economic problems.

As one way of helping young people get a start in profitable employment a Federal Committee on Apprenticeship has been established in the United States Department of Labor. Through State and local committees it is working to stimulate apprenticeship as a means of vocational preparation for many skilled trades and to assure the apprentice adequate training on the job while protecting him from exploitation and preventing the employment of pseudo apprentices at low rates.

Guidance and counseling services always need to be adapted to changing conditions. Placement services for youth need specially trained staff, who should work in full cooperation with the vocational preparation and guidance activities of the schools.

Vocational training and guidance, however wise, are only preliminary to real work; and placement services, however efficient, cannot make placements except by moving workers around or pushing some out of employment, unless there is work enough for all. It is now generally agreed by those most concerned about youth that, in the absence of enough work, work-projects—useful in themselves and educational for those participating in them—should be provided by Federal, State, and local governments for young people over 16 who are not attending school and cannot find work.

The two agencies established by the Federal Government in the interest primarily of unemployed youth, the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration, have received general approbation. Both were incorporated in the Federal Security Agency by the reorganization plan effective July 1, 1939.

The Civilian Conservation Corps was created by Executive order in April 1933 with the twofold purpose of giving relief to single men and their families and of improving the public domain, "conserving" both manpower and forests. This measure has met with general public approval. In

June 1937 it was established by act of Congress for a period of 3 years, which has now been extended for 3 years more, to June 30, 1943.

The Civilian Conservation Corps employs young men 17 to 23<sup>42</sup> years of age, chiefly in the national parks and forests and on reclamation and flood-control projects. They enroll for a period of 6 months, with the privilege of re-enrollment up to a maximum of 2 years. They live in special barrack camps, of which there are about 1,500, distributed over all the States, and they are engaged in a balanced routine of work, recreation, and study, with health and counseling services available. The authorized strength of the C. C. C. (for enrollees of this class) is 270,000. At first one of the requirements for eligibility was that they be members of families on relief, and they were expected to send home the greater part of their cash allowance of \$30 per month. In 1937 that requirement was withdrawn, but it was stipulated that the boy must be unemployed and in need of employment. Since June 1940 this has been interpreted to permit acceptance of boys from families of moderate means who cannot give them further educational opportunities. A total of 2,209,000 young men were enrolled from April 1, 1933, to March 31, 1940.<sup>43</sup>

The National Youth Administration was created by Executive order in June 1935, within the Works Progress Administration. It has continued and expanded the student-aid program begun by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration; it has conducted work projects for out-of-school youth, intended to give experience suited to personal interests and aptitudes and likely to be useful in regular employment; it has maintained resident centers for brief periods of training in agriculture, homemaking, and mechanical trades, where students can earn their expenses; it has developed health programs for young people, with State and local cooperation; and it has set up guidance programs in conjunction with Federal and State employment agencies, which have greatly increased the counseling services available for young people.

Its student-aid program of part-time work, to enable young people 16 to 24 years of age, inclusive, to continue their schooling, reached the number of 473,485 students aided, in March 1940 with 29,150 schools and colleges participating. Their earnings that month averaged \$6.91.<sup>44</sup>

In its work projects for out-of-school youth 18 to 24 years of age, inclusive, N. Y. A. employed 336,282 young persons in March 1940, the highest number up to that time. The average during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940, was 270,000, representing about 550,000 persons in the course

<sup>42</sup> That is, up to 23½ years of age; enrollees must be under 24 years of age during the entire 6 months' period of enrollment.

<sup>43</sup> Youth Programs, by M. M. Chambers. *Social Work Year Book, 1941*, pp. 615-617. In the calendar year 1941, there was a considerable reduction in the number of C. C. C. camps, due largely to the increase in employment opportunities for young workers—from approximately 1,500 in January 1940 to approximately 800 in January 1941. This represented a proportionate reduction in the number of enrollees.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 614.

of the year. The program was extended to Puerto Rico in January 1940, and was to be established in Alaska and in the Virgin Islands. About a third of those who leave the N. Y. A. rolls are reported as doing so to take work in private industry.<sup>45</sup> Earnings on work projects average between \$15 and \$16 per month.

Resident projects of N. Y. A., providing a full-time program of work and related study in various kinds of mechanical work, agriculture, health and hospital work, homemaking, construction, and other occupations in August 1940 numbered about 600 in 45 States and employed approximately 30,000 young persons. Expansion of resident projects to offer greater opportunities for training in shops and mechanical work in every State has been planned for the near future. Emphasis is being given to projects that will aid in the preparation of young persons for employment in industries that are expected to expand as a result of the national-defense program.

C. C. C. and N. Y. A. are pioneer experiments. As constituted up to 1940 they have reached only a fraction of the young persons who were out of work and out of school—probably less than one-seventh at a given time—and have reached a considerably larger proportion of the boys than of the girls. Their programs do not meet all the requirements of a complete educational and vocational system. There is room for much improvement. But they represent a step—a tremendously important step—in public policy in the right direction.

Students of the trend of population in the United States estimate that the number of persons 15 to 19 years of age is now at its maximum and will soon begin to decline.<sup>46</sup> That consideration may affect plans in the more distant future, but it does not affect the problem now. The expansion of war industries may temporarily reduce the problem by increasing the number of openings for young people. It has already added opportunities for useful instruction in basic mechanics and training for and employment in "defense jobs" in industry.<sup>47</sup> Military training will not, by temporarily removing young men from the labor market, solve the fundamental problem.

The welfare of youth is bound up with the welfare of the Nation. It is not in the tradition of American youth to wait passively for the older generation to open the gates of opportunity for them. American youth has always had—and still has—courage, imagination, ingenuity, resilience, and it has more at stake than its elders. We must look to the young men and women not yet 25 years old to work at our basic economic problems, to develop

<sup>45</sup> N. Y. A. press releases, July 1 and 2, 1940.

<sup>46</sup> *Population Statistics: National Data*, pp. 9-22. National Resources Committee, Washington, October 1937.

<sup>47</sup> Training or re-training in special summer sessions in vocational schools in 283 cities was started as a feature of the national-defense program on July 1, 1940, a few days after the President signed the bill appropriating \$15,000,000 for the purpose. By August 15 more than 80,000 men were in training. Courses are open to men and boys 18 to 60 years of age. As the primary object is to increase the supply of workers with skills needed in defense industries, preference is given to men who can qualify for employment quickly.



new wants and find ways to supply them, to match needs and resources, to realize for themselves and their children the visions of a better life which they have had—and still have—notwithstanding their privations and discouragement.

### The Double-Ended Problem

Economic conditions affect the contrasting work problems of childhood and of youth in opposite ways. In times of depression the business of keeping young children out of work is easier than in normal times, but it is harder for boys and girls who are old enough to work to find suitable employment. On the other hand, when there is a lively demand for labor, young people, even without experience and of limited capacity and education, as well as persons who had been considered past the working age, find a ready market for their services and a variety of employments to choose from at high wages, and children are in greater danger of drifting into, or being pushed into, wage-earning employment prematurely, at the cost of health and education.

Under changing conditions, therefore, now the prevention of child labor, now provision for idle youth, seems the more urgent. From the general point of view it may be that the relative number of persons involved determines which is the more pressing social problem. From the point of view of the individual working child or the individual young man or young woman without work, the number of other individuals in like case is irrelevant. For all who are interested in a comprehensive program for children in a democracy the two sections of the problem of employment are equally important, and neither section can be considered completely solved as a social problem until the individual problem of every child and young person is solved.

Fortunately there is no conflict between measures for the protection of children from premature or injurious employment and measures for the preparation and establishment of youth in employment that will be satisfying. On the contrary, they supplement each other. The more successfully children are kept out of work where they do not belong, the more opportunities will there be for the older boys and girls who are ready to profit by them. The more successfully youth can compete for employment, the fewer will be the places left for children, and the better will be the prospect that the children of those who are youth today will have the kind of childhood we desire for them.

As in all other social problems, the urgency derives from the inexorable character of time. The children of today will be youth tomorrow. The youth of today are on the threshold of maturity and will have a major responsibility for the character of American life for the next half century. Whatever needs to be done must be done quickly.

## Chapter XI

### Social Services for Children

#### Objectives of Social Services for Children

**I**N an earlier section of this report attention was called to the three perspectives that determined the studies and recommendations of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy. One perspective includes all the children of the United States—the “one hundred per cent.” For every child, it is our hope that he will be enabled to live a democratic life in family and in community, so that increasingly the common culture of the land and the educational years of the child shall be vitally and progressively democratic. The second perspective comprises between half and two-thirds of the children. (See *Livelihood*, p. pp. 81–82.) They are the children whose parents and communities are unable to provide for them the standard of care that the progress and resources of the Nation would seem to justify. The obstacles impeding this group lie chiefly, although not exclusively, in the inadequacy of the incomes of their parents, whose livelihood depends on wages, agriculture, and low-salaried employment. Beyond the difficulties experienced because of economic limitations, children in this group, or a substantial portion of them, suffer certain other disadvantages often inseparable from their economic situation. These disadvantages are inherent in the conditions of life in stranded industrial towns or rural problem areas; in the frequent social discriminations against the Negro or other racial groups and, to a lesser extent, against the foreign born; or in circumstances of individual family life which impair the effectiveness of the home as a place for the nurture of children. The present White House Conference, being concerned with “children in a democracy,” has emphasized far beyond its predecessors, the conditions surrounding this large body of children and the corrective measures that are indispensable if they are to enjoy the heritage of American democracy.

The third group of children—of whom many are in the second group also—consists of those who have been traditionally classified as “handicapped”: The crippled, blind, deaf, and chronically ill; the mentally deficient; those deprived of parent and home; those living in homes where their welfare is seriously menaced; the delinquent and morally endangered; and that ever-present group, the children of families in acute economic distress. For generations, this group of children has received the attention

of philanthropic and official agencies. The earlier White House Conferences devoted much thought to their problems, for despite the centuries of community concern for their welfare, society still failed—and even today fails—to give them the amount and kind of service required to compensate for their handicaps. The present White House Conference has also given attention to this body of children, in the hope that the day may come when in this democracy no child will incur any disability that human ingenuity can prevent, or continue to suffer from one that intelligent care can remove or cancel.

A simple classification might divide this third group of children into two further groups: Those for whom the difficulty is chiefly economic or social, and those for whom it is largely mental, physical, or psychological. Such a classification, in fact, has made possible tremendous strides in improving the condition of children by giving economic assistance to their parents. All efforts on a large scale to raise the income of workers in the general population by improving the basic economic structure of the Nation naturally tend to reduce the number of children in need. These efforts and the importance of extending them are discussed elsewhere in this report. In Chapter VII consideration was given to the measures by which families may be given economic assistance where the current economic order provides insufficient income to the breadwinner or where there are no breadwinners in the family who ordinarily would be expected to support it. The administration of economic aid involves, it is true, identifying and dealing with many social problems related to or accompanying economic need. It is, therefore, a form of social service that demands more than merely a distribution of material aid.

Other types of difficulty, however, not in themselves economic in nature, impose economic burdens that few families are able to bear. Such situations necessarily call for outside assistance, for if the family is unable to meet these extra expenses, the child suffers, and his disability may increase. Thus deafness, blindness, a crippling disability, a prolonged illness, mental deficiency, some behavior difficulties present economic burdens which most families, even if otherwise self-supporting, cannot afford to bear unassisted. Such difficulties, moreover, especially when they are of a relatively permanent nature, involve psychological complications that may require skilled services quite apart from the economic problem involved.

The supplementation of income alone, therefore, in families where such children are found is not always sufficient. Most such children require special care for themselves and tend to create problems in family life and personal adjustment that often extend the need for guidance to the family as a whole. To deal with such difficulties requires skilled social service, as well as medical and nursing care, and, often, special edu-

cation. Even where the parents have ample resources, skilled service from the community may be necessary to assist them.

Among the children who have been traditionally classified as "handicapped" are those who have no parents, or only one parent, or parents unsuited to their responsibilities. Economic difficulties—and in most cases they are present—aggravate such situations; but clearly money alone is no substitute for parent. The absence of normal family life, when so much is expected from that human institution in the life of the child, is almost sure to be reflected in thwarted if not distorted emotional life. If in the absence of one or both parents suitable family life does not grow out of the presence of other members of the family, some deliberate effort may be required to make up the loss. It has been the function of the social-service worker to study this need where it occurs and to seek measures for meeting it.

Out of the many possible combinations of children's needs and handicaps, some of which have been indicated here, arose in the course of time a number of major groupings of child-welfare problems. For convenience they may be called:

*The child in the dependent family.*

*The child in the broken family (with one or both parents missing).*

*The child whose parents fail to provide proper care.*

*The child with disabling physical defect.*

*The child with disabling mental defect.*

*The child exhibiting behavior problems.*

Clearly, these groupings are not mutually exclusive, for a child may easily belong to several at the same time. But a rough classification, based on these problems, has been found useful.

On the basis of the recognition of the needs of these children many agencies of diverse types have come into existence, each type characterized in part by the group of children served, in part by the nature of the services rendered, and in part according to whether the children served remained in their own homes or were given substitute care in other families or in institutions. These agencies are conducted both under public and under private auspices and under many separate denominations, fraternal organizations, and ethnic bodies. They are supported by a variety of funds and are controlled by an incredible number of restrictions imposed by bequests, by church organizations, by legal technicalities, by political accidents. Many of these agencies in planning for the children have not taken fully into consideration the fact that most children under their care still had families and in time would return to them and to the community from which they came.

Opposed to this tendency to divide and subdivide types of children and to create varied agencies for their care, two major concepts have obtained ever-increasing acceptance in the field of child welfare. One—which

formed the principal theme of the first White House Conference—emphasized the importance of keeping the child in his home whenever possible. As a result, over the years, many thousands of children were enabled to stay with their parents where economic distress was the primary difficulty, whereas previously they might have been placed in foster homes or institutions. The other concept—antedating in origin the first White House Conference—is one that has changed the concept of social service in the past few decades and is of particular importance for children. It is that of individualization of treatment: That each child may need something different from what is needed by any other, and that the unit of treatment should be the child rather than the group or the institutional population. Thus all agencies dealing with children have sought or have been urged to give individualized case-work services to children; the terms *orphan*, *dependent*, *neglected*, *delinquent* have come to carry less and less significance; and foster homes rather than institutions have been used in many more cases, since they approximate family life and, being smaller units, are more conducive to individualization than is institutional treatment.

If these major concepts are still valid, what should the present White House Conference seek to emphasize in its proposals for the care of children, and what organization of facilities should be suggested as vehicles of its proposals? They might be briefly summarized in this way:

1. In cases where the child's needs arise principally from the poverty of his parents, a complete system of public assistance—as discussed earlier (Ch. VII)—should be developed, so that no child need suffer and no family need be broken up for economic reasons alone.
2. Accompanying the effort to provide adequately for children whose families are in economic distress, continuous study should be given to the best ways of dealing with children presenting other needs, for example:
  - a. Children without suitable homes: They may require special service to rehabilitate the home or, if this is impossible, placement for foster care or adoption;
  - b. Children with behavior difficulties: Their treatment (possibly including correlative treatment of other members of the family) often requires skilled case work, possibly the application of legal measures, and, in some instances, care in institutions;
  - c. Mentally deficient children;
  - d. Physically handicapped children who require appropriate treatment.
3. Means should be available in every part of the country, rural and urban, to discover children whose needs might be met by economic assistance or social service and to secure for them the assistance or services needed. And, as the distribution of these children is Nation-

wide and the cost of dealing with them is beyond the capacity of private philanthropy, and as the responsibility itself is a public obligation, the means of discovering and providing for children in need of social service should be included among the functions discharged by public-welfare agencies.

4. The acceptance of the fundamental responsibility for needed social services for children as a public obligation carries with it the necessity of formulating a suitable administrative and fiscal program. Provision should be made for articulating the work of local, State, and Federal governments into this program; for assuring competent personnel under a merit system; for keeping the public informed and interested; and for coordinating with this public program the programs of the private agencies that have a useful and constructive function to perform.

Several of the most important aspects of a social-service program for children have been the subject of a great deal of consideration in the past, and therefore require less attention from this Conference. The needs of the economically handicapped children are dealt with in this report as part of the larger subject of economic aid to families and are partly covered in the discussion of social insurance (Ch. VI). The body of the discussion and the chief proposals submitted in the present chapter relate, therefore, to the method of organizing a Nation-wide system of finding and providing for children who may require social services and of integrating such a system with the general structure of public-welfare services and with the work of agencies under private auspices.

## **Services to Special Groups in Relation to General Child Welfare**

It is obvious that as long as any child is permitted to suffer from disadvantages that may be removed, or at least lightened or compensated for, that child is not receiving the equal opportunity that we think of as the hallmark of democracy. To bring such a child as nearly as possible up to par with other children in having access to the fruits of civilization is therefore of the very essence of democratic purpose. The thought and service given to children requiring this specialized care have contributed in several ways to the promotion and advancement of the welfare of all children. In part, this has come through a recognition of the wider usefulness of the technical methods devised primarily for specialized service; in part, through study of the causes of these special needs or handicaps; and in part, through the fact that when public responsibility had been accepted for serving the disadvantaged child, it became easier to propose and to introduce similar services for the benefit of the general child population. For these reasons the work of social agencies—whether public or

private—has tended to blur the dividing line between disadvantaged children and other children, and to make programs for special groups of children less and less distinguishable from a general child-welfare program. Under public administration this differentiation diminishes still further. This generic nature of the child-welfare program largely underlies the proposals of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy.

It may be well to illustrate this tendency with a few particulars. One such illustration is the record of work for the reduction of maternal and infant mortality; another, the progress in the educational field; another, the widening application of individualized treatment or case work.

High infant and maternal mortality rates, for example, have been found to be associated chiefly with low incomes and the accompanying lack of medical supervision, food, access to hospital facilities, and nursing services. It is associated also with lack of knowledge of many fundamentally important facts about the care of the prospective mother and of the infant during the crucial early months of his life. Among the chief means of reducing the unnecessary and preventable deaths are educational services to mothers, procurement of medical and nursing services in the home, and the provision of hospital and clinic facilities. These remedies, first thought of in relation to the low-income groups, have come to be parts of the administration of public-health programs and have therefore tended to become tax-supported activities and to be regarded as serving the whole community rather than merely the "poor." Especially in rural areas, in which the middle economic stratum as well as the low-income group, has limited access to medical and hospital services, the attempt to serve those most deprived of health facilities has tended to benefit the entire community and therefore all the children.

The educational field serves as another illustration of how the concern for children with special needs tends to serve all children as well. The great public-school system of the United States, for example, began in the philanthropic endeavor to provide schooling for children whose parents could not afford tuition. To take another example, much of the advance in pedagogic technique has been derived from the study of ways of educating the backward, deficient, difficult child—the school's problem child. Education through recreation, the vast development of playgrounds, parks, play fields, have gained stimulus from the recognition of the handicaps of children deprived of such opportunities at home or in the ill-favored neighborhoods in which they live. The momentum for enriching the school system, especially in rural areas and small communities, has had a similar origin. In this field, as in the field of public health, the disadvantaged group and the low-income group tend to become one large group of children, which overlaps the *all-children perspective* of welfare planning.

Treatment by individualization cannot perhaps so logically be claimed as a contribution from techniques for the handicapped. Certainly in medi-

cine it has always existed. Education properly claims it. Yet from no source has the importance of individualization flowed so fully and so consistently as from social case-work treatment, which was devised and developed in social service to the disadvantaged; and no group of practitioners has contributed so much to its universalization as a principle applicable to all children (and all persons in social difficulties) as have the social case workers in private and in public social agencies.

These illustrations and the trend that they represent are important not because of their historical interest but because they throw light on one of the puzzles of our day—the place and meaning of social services in the American scene. Social services are a necessary part of a democratic system, of a system that seeks equal opportunity for all and insists on removing existing inequalities and unfairness. The social services, conceived in this way, are a test and a symbol of democracy; their assumption by government gives them an organic place in the democratic commonwealth; the gradual removal of handicaps from the disadvantaged, as well as from the underprivileged, leads in the direction of a comprehensive democracy. In such a society only those handicaps have a place that are not preventable and that reflect only the unequal endowments granted by nature. In such a democracy the social services have a proud as well as a necessary place.

### How Many Children Require Social Services?

How many children require or justify the social services discussed here? We have no dependable answer to this question. Figures cited in another part of this report indicate that children representing purely economic difficulties, so far as they are accounted for by the fact that their families were receiving some form of public aid, numbered as high as 8 million in March 1939. In the course of the depression this number may have varied in one direction or the other by several millions. We know, moreover, that many thousands of children needed such assistance and did not receive it. This group of children, however, is not under discussion here, as their problem is rather one of family income than of special services to children.

On the basis of census figures<sup>1</sup> it is fair to estimate that at a given time in the United States some 250,000 children are receiving foster care away from their own homes, in institutions and in private homes. The great majority of these children, if not all, require social case-work services, which, in most instances, implies services to their families as well. Recent figures indicate that about 32,500 children are in public institutions for juvenile delinquents on a given date,<sup>2</sup> and that approximately 200,000

<sup>1</sup> *Children Under Institutional Care and in Foster Homes, 1933*, pp. 7-8. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Based on *Directory of State, County, and Municipal Training Schools Caring for Delinquent Children in the United States* (Children's Bureau Publication No. 264, Washington, 1940).



children a year come to the attention of juvenile courts.<sup>3</sup> It is not possible to estimate, even approximately, the number of children presenting serious problems, who are given more or less adequate individualized service in schools, private child-caring agencies, family agencies, child-guidance clinics, and hospitals.<sup>4</sup> Estimates of the number of physically handicapped children are also based on inadequate data. By the end of the year 1940, State registers of crippled children under the Social Security Act listed more than 290,000 children. On the basis of the registration rates of the States showing the highest number of crippled children per 1,000 population under 21 years of age a total for the United States probably would be between 400,000 and 500,000. This number takes no account of the many children who, although not yet crippled, suffer from conditions that usually lead to crippling if neglected. The number of children blind or partially sighted, deaf or hard of hearing, who need some form of social service, as well as special facilities for medical care and for education, cannot be estimated with any degree of accuracy. Nor do these numbers take account of defective vision, teeth, or nutrition. The number of mentally deficient children needing some degree of social service to further their adjustment also cannot be estimated with accuracy. It is estimated by the Children's Bureau that approximately 40,000 mentally deficient children under 20 years of age are in institutions for the care of such persons.<sup>5</sup>

It is clear, then, that we have in the United States an enormous task in caring for children with distinct disadvantages or handicaps, not counting economic distress as such. This task consists of three interlocking parts: Giving adequate care in accordance with modern standards to those known and "under care"; providing further facilities to children whose needs are known but for whom no appropriate services are available; finding the children who have similar needs but are not known to any agency, either because no social agency exists in the community or because the facilities and resources of the agency are not equal to the task of both caring for the known and seeking out the unknown children who are in need of social services. Any plan in keeping with an American standard of child care, equal to our sense of public responsibility and our national pride, must comprise ways of carrying out this threefold task in every part of the country.

<sup>3</sup> Based on juvenile-court statistics reported to the Children's Bureau for 1940. The number of delinquency cases reported by a group of courts serving 38 percent of the total population of the United States was 82,821. As the same child may be involved in several cases in a single year, the number of children was somewhat less than this figure. This number includes cases dealt with officially and those dealt with unofficially to the extent that the latter type of case was reported; some courts reported only official cases.

<sup>4</sup> The 1933 census reported that more than 30,000 children were receiving care in their own homes from child-caring institutions and agencies; on May 31, 1940, approximately 45,000 children, chiefly in rural areas, three-fourths in their own homes or in homes of relatives, were receiving service from child-welfare-service workers paid in whole or in part from Federal funds.

<sup>5</sup> Neil A. Dayton, M. D., Director, Division of Mental Deficiency, Department of Mental Health, Boston, Mass., has estimated that there are 9 mentally deficient persons living at large in the community for every 1 in an institution.

## Social Services for Children Prior to 1940

Social protection, whether through philanthropy, law, or public administration, naturally reached out first to children without homes or parents and to those who were neglected, abused, or exploited by adults. The less obvious dangers to child life received little attention until relatively recent years. Thus systematic measures to save infant life, the movement to eliminate blighting child labor, and such legal innovations in penal law and criminal procedure as the individualized treatment of juvenile delinquents are the contributions of the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth.

The White House Conferences of 1919 and 1930 were able to report great gains in the recognition of social responsibility for children, particularly for those lacking proper support or parental care. These gains came from many sources: The organization or enlargement of resources of private agencies, including local, State-wide, and Nation-wide agencies; the review of legal and social protection for children by numerous State commissions; the introduction of new or improved public services, local, State, and Federal. The most significant development in child welfare in the 10 years which have elapsed since the 1930 Conference has come through the experiences of the depression period that have proved the impossibility of dealing with the problems then created or fully recognized for the first time, except through Nation-wide measures.

These measures have centered around the conservation and strengthening of home life and have involved government services as varied in kind as farm-security measures, public housing projects in cities, and Federal aid for public health and for maternal and child-health services. The principal services of these types are discussed in the chapters on Economic Assistance, Livelihood, Health, Education, Employment, and Dwellings. Every State now has a State welfare department with a variety of functions other than institutional administration, including assistance in the development of local social services. Local public-welfare organization has been greatly extended and strengthened in the past 10 years and has provided services to children in their own homes as well as in foster homes. By June 30, 1940, child-welfare workers paid in whole or in part from Federal funds under the child-welfare-services program authorized by the Social Security Act were employed in approximately 500 rural counties—about one-fifth of the total number of rural counties in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

Outstanding as have been the achievements in certain fields of social service for children, it is impossible to review the progress that has been

<sup>6</sup> Reporting of Case-Work Services to Children Under the Social Security Act, Title V, Part 3. *The Child* (published by the Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor), Vol. 5, No. 6, Supplement No. 2 (December 1940), pp. 7-8.

made in protecting and safeguarding child life during the last decade without reciting also the overwhelming problems which have been created by the depression. Moreover, many conditions and practices prevailing before the depression period still create grave social problems and limit the effectiveness of child-welfare work.

### ***Conditions Impeding Growth.***

Among the conditions impeding the development of effective service to children, these are of special gravity:

Recurring periods of unemployment, notably the unprecedented and continuing one that developed its high point after the 1929 financial crash.

Low family incomes producing widespread and chronic privation in family life. Studies in 1935-36 showed that an estimated one-third of the families of the United States were living on incomes of less than \$780 a year, and an additional third on less than \$1,450.<sup>7</sup>

Dislocation of industry and agriculture, which greatly increased the number of migrant families. Their children in most instances are cut off from nearly all the essentials of home life and of community relationships.

Laws relating to settlement for purposes of relief, which vary greatly from State to State and are often severely restrictive in their requirements. These laws leave many families without "legal settlement" in any community, a situation that imposes serious hardships not only upon migrant families and their children but also upon many other families in no sense belonging to the migrant group.

Public attitudes toward relief that hinder its use in the rehabilitation of family life; limited staff and financial resources for administration of general relief and other forms of assistance; and appropriations for relief insufficient to maintain even a minimum standard of living.

Preoccupation of many State and local welfare agencies with the administrative problems of public assistance, to the neglect of other types of social service, with far from adequate attention paid to the fact that heavy case loads carried by workers make it difficult for them to give individual attention and to arrange for necessary services to the children in the families under their care.

Undesirable practices frequently occurring in the administration of public welfare, including: Political patronage; limitation of appointments to those having residence within a State or a locality; lack of security of tenure; and failure to appreciate the need for employing workers with special preparation for service to children and families.

Lack of public funds in many communities, especially in rural areas, for the maintenance in foster-family homes of children who need such

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<sup>7</sup> *Consumer Incomes in the United States*, pp. 8-9. National Resources Committee, Washington, August 1938.

care and for the provision of services to these children—such as medical, educational, and recreational services. Allowances for the care of children in boarding homes are often inadequate for obtaining the quality of care needed.

Failure to coordinate the services of child-caring institutions and agencies and those of other organizations in the community concerned with related problems; especially and perhaps most deplorably, failure to utilize resources for conserving or rehabilitating the child's own home.

Excessive dependence of the public, in some areas, on services provided by private child-caring organizations and payment of public funds to such agencies for the care of children, without the exercise by the public agency of responsibility for seeing that all children needing foster care are suitably provided for under the existing arrangements, whether under public or private auspices.

Practices in court cases affecting the custody, support, or parental care of children that are often needlessly destructive to family life and to the individual. These practices are encountered in civil, criminal, juvenile, domestic-relations, and probate courts.

Hearings of children's cases in some communities in juvenile courts conducted in accordance with police-court procedure, or in criminal courts. Juvenile-court judges often lack the necessary qualifications for dealing with the social aspects of the problems involved in children's cases, and many courts either lack staffs or have inadequate staffs of probation officers or of other social workers with qualifications for this work.

Reliance by communities upon institutional treatment of delinquency, without sufficient emphasis upon prevention of behavior difficulties; absence of facilities for scientific study of mental conditions, of emotional disturbances, and of personality difficulties that may contribute to the delinquency of many children; and lack of adequate case-work treatment, even where study is given to children.

Indiscriminate commitment, in some localities, of children to institutions for the treatment of juvenile delinquency when they do not require the type of treatment provided in these institutions, but do require other kinds of service. Often, indeed, commitment of children needing public care to State industrial schools seems to be resorted to in certain communities not because the children are delinquent, but because the cost of their maintenance is thus shifted to the State.

Insufficient provision for the care and training of mentally deficient, epileptic, and psychotic children. This makes it impossible in many cases to obtain suitable care for such children and creates difficult problems for the community or for the child-caring organizations that may be obliged to receive or retain them.

## Major Problems To Be Met

In view of these circumstances what are the important phases of the present situation to which proposals of this Conference should be addressed?

In spite of the development of progressively better methods of providing social service to children, a large but unascertainable number of children are still without access to the service needed or are receiving care or assistance only through antiquated methods:

In some places children still receive care in almshouses.<sup>8</sup>

In many more places delinquent children are still being detained in jails and police stations pending hearing or disposition.<sup>9</sup>

There are children in institutions who could receive care more suitable to their needs in their own communities, and children who are kept in institutions because service has not been available to rehabilitate their homes so that they may return to them.

Institutions to which many children have been sent are so crowded and their facilities so meager that they do not constitute an instrument for training or treatment.

Social services for children in rural areas are lacking more often than they are available.

The very number and similarity of agencies in some of the larger cities make it difficult for families and general community agencies to secure most effective help.

Although Negro children usually live under worse home and neighborhood conditions than white children, less adequate resources for foster care in homes and institutions have been provided for them.

Children and families of migrants are not often considered in the child-welfare plans of the communities to which they have come.

Definite trends in juvenile delinquency in the last decade have not been established; figures for juvenile courts reporting to the Children's Bureau have fluctuated up and down. The number of cases coming to juvenile courts and the proportion of young people among those arrested,<sup>10</sup> however, and the general agreement on the early beginning of conduct difficulties, justify concern as to whether we are now carrying out measures for children which will decrease future delinquency.

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<sup>8</sup> *Reports on Child-Welfare Services in Rural Areas Provided for Under the Federal Social Security Act, Title V, Part 3: Excerpts from State progress reports, 6 months ended December 31, 1937*, pp. 12, 155. Children's Bureau, Washington, April 1938. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>9</sup> In the year 1940, 514 juvenile courts reported statistical information to the Children's Bureau. Of the 67,965 cases dealt with by these courts, for which information on detention was reported, the children in 4,881 cases were reported as having been detained in jails or police stations. In addition, many children are detained in jails or police stations and released without referral to court.

<sup>10</sup> The arrest record reviewed during the first 9 months of 1940 indicates that persons of 19 years were most frequently taken into custody, and that age 19 has led in the majority of compilations of this nature since 1932. (*Uniform Crime Reports for the United States and Its Possessions*, Third Quarterly Bulletin, 1940, Vol. 11, No. 3, p. 142. Federal Bureau of Investigation, U. S. Department of Justice, Washington.)

The provisions for mentally deficient children are gravely inadequate and have not kept pace with provisions for other handicapped children.

Thousands of mentally deficient children on the waiting lists of institutions are without other needed social-service supervision or care.

Other children are not being served because they present problems which science and skill have not yet been able to solve.

These, in brief, are the major problems of children to be met by the system of social services in 1940.

## Planning Social Services for Children

### *Community Child-Welfare Programs.*

Any service to meet a child's need must, of course, be available where the child is or where he can have reasonable access to it. For all practical purposes, therefore, the program of services should be a local community program. Such roles as the State or Federal Government may play are therefore cast to support and re-enforce the primary role of the local community and to supply such resources and services as the latter may not be able to provide. It must be presumed that the usual facilities for the general requirements of the child are to be found in the local community: School, play space, friends and neighbors, church, health agencies, and medical services. The system of social services should therefore supplement these resources. They should be locally available for meeting the needs of the handicapped child, with a threefold objective in view: To meet known needs for such services, to expand resources where they are lacking or insufficient, and to discover children requiring social services but not known to any operating agencies. The complement of these services should include:

1. Social service for children living in their own homes or elsewhere, who are dependent, neglected, mistreated, or exploited by their natural guardians or other adults, delinquent or in danger of becoming delinquent; services for unmarried mothers and their babies and for children placed for adoption.
2. Child-guidance service for the study and treatment of children with special problems of personality or behavior.
3. Foster care, in family homes or institutions adapted to the children's individual needs, for children who must be cared for away from their own homes temporarily or for long periods.
4. Service to physically handicapped children, in cooperation with health and educational agencies.
5. Cooperation with State and local agencies providing education, special training, and custodial care, in giving social protection to mentally deficient and psychotic children.

6. Stimulation and assistance in the development of community resources which will assure to every child the care his needs require.

7. Cooperative effort to remedy community conditions detrimental to the welfare of children and to promote conditions favorable to their health and well-being.

Although private children's agencies, established for the purpose of providing at least some of these services, exist in practically all large cities, only a minority of small towns and rural areas have them. A Nation-wide program, since the responsibility is a public one, should not depend on optional private endeavor. This Conference submits, therefore, that—

*As the foundation of any comprehensive plan, every county or other appropriate administrative unit of government should assume responsibility for the development of an inclusive program of services to children whose home conditions or individual difficulties or disabilities require special attention.*

Although child-welfare problems in urban and in rural areas may differ in extent, they do not differ greatly in character. The same quality of service, in accordance with the same basic principles, is needed in both.

In many communities, especially in rural areas, child-welfare services are entirely lacking. In cities the work of existing public and private organizations often needs to be coordinated and supplemented. For example, there may be an oversupply of institutional or foster-family care for children who are removed from their homes because of dependency or neglect, while provision may be lacking for children who need specialized care because of illness, physical or mental handicaps, or conduct problems. Service for children in their own homes, despite its importance, frequently is less available than care away from home. Diagnostic service to determine the kind of care required by children is often not available. In all fields of child welfare greater provision has been made for treatment than for prevention of disability and maladjustment.

An indispensable foundation for a complete service program is, of course, an adequate and well-administered system of public assistance, as indicated elsewhere in this report. In its best form public assistance includes auxiliary case-work services and such supplementary resources as homemaker or housekeeper services.

To receive needed social services the only test of a child's eligibility should be the fact of his need and the inability of his natural parents or guardians to remove or sufficiently to compensate for the child's limitations and disadvantages.

Eligibility for service should not be based on legal residence, economic status, race or nationality, nor on any consideration other than the child's need. Utilization of private agencies for child care should not prevent the public department from providing appropriate care to a child in need. Every child who comes to the attention of a public-welfare agency should be

given whatever service he requires without the necessity of court commitment, except when provision must be made for change of legal custody or guardianship or when legal action is needed because of the parents' neglect or the child's delinquency. The responsibility of the agency should continue as long as the child is in need of services.

The most widespread type of public agency serving the needs of people in difficulties is the local welfare department that is responsible for public assistance, including, in a fully developed program, general public assistance, aid to dependent children, old-age assistance, and assistance to special groups such as the blind. This type of agency is the logical unit, therefore, for administering other social services; it should exercise the responsibility for making certain that, so far as is possible, all the services needed by children are made available to them. Preferably such a department should itself be equipped to offer these services. But whether it has these resources in itself or seeks to obtain them through the cooperation of other agencies, public or private, the responsibility for seeing that services become available should remain with that department.

Child-guidance service with resources for competent psychiatric, psychological, and social study and treatment is a necessary part of a community welfare program. This service, under competent professional direction, should be accessible to health, educational, and social-welfare agencies, and may be provided by any one of these agencies or under other appropriate auspices. Many cities have established mental-hygiene or child-guidance service, but small towns and rural areas are largely without such resources. Encouraging experiments in extending such facilities to rural areas are being made, chiefly under the auspices of State departments. Extension of child-guidance programs is hampered by the limited number of qualified workers available. There is great need for expanded opportunities for training in this field.

The primary responsibility of the school is, of course, the organization of an educational program which is sufficiently flexible to meet individual needs. It has an important place, however, in the prevention and treatment of social problems of children. In cities the employment of social workers by the school offers a promising means of discovering and dealing with the social problems of children at an early stage. This service is needed in many cases as an aid in adjusting the school program to the needs of the individual child. For extended treatment these workers have to depend largely upon the organized social-welfare resources of the community. In many rural areas social service needed in relation to the school program will probably have to be provided by the public-welfare agency.

Adequate standards for selection, training, and advancement of staff on the basis of merit should be maintained by the authorities responsible for



child-welfare work. Child-welfare service in both rural areas and cities requires ability to deal with a wide range of individual problems and community conditions. Social-service training and experience in dealing with the special problems of children are therefore essential.

The active interest of informed citizens is indispensable in the development of good public service and the coordination of the work of public and private agencies. In all areas advisory committees and private associations are useful in creating public interest and assisting the public-welfare department in maintaining standards. In the larger communities private children's agencies, with their boards of directors, executives, and staffs can contribute greatly to the formation of public opinion and the development of citizen support for public as well as private child-welfare services.

#### *Foster-Care Services.*

Aside from assistance to children in economic distress because of the economic distress of their families and certain special programs referred to elsewhere (for example, for delinquent, physically handicapped, and mentally deficient children, and those requiring medical and social service by reason of illness), the type of child-welfare service that has received most attention in the past is the provision of foster care for children not in their own homes. Both professional personnel and lay public have devoted the major part of their child-welfare activities to this phase of the work. Together with emphasis on preservation of the child's own home, it was the chief concern of the first White House Conference, and it retained the interest and attention of the succeeding ones. No essentially new theories with respect to this phase of child welfare are being offered by the present Conference. Certain new emphases and perhaps more matured and therefore deeper convictions have emerged, however, and may, therefore, be summarized:

Every community should have suitable facilities to discover children requiring foster care.

The assurance of such foster care when it is required is a public responsibility and must not be left or shifted to voluntary or optional interest; therefore a public-welfare department should exercise this responsibility in every local government unit throughout the country. Private agencies may well be utilized for this service under either denominational or nonsectarian auspices, so long as—

- (a) The public-welfare department retains responsibility for the welfare of the child.
- (b) The public-welfare department supervises the quality of service.
- (c) The public-welfare department controls the use of tax funds by private agencies for this purpose.

Extension of public provision for financial aid to families in need, including social insurance, public assistance, and general relief, will decrease the occasion for foster care as a substitute for the home. Facilities now used for children who might have remained in their own homes if the necessary assistance had been available might better be reserved for the care of children with such special types of disabilities as may preferably be treated outside their own homes. Many institutions and agencies have already begun to readjust their activities in order to meet these changed conditions.

During the past few years the use of boarding-home care has increased greatly in relation to other forms of foster care and has been adapted to meet the needs of children with special problems of health or social adjustment. Care of crippled children in boarding homes has been extended, especially under the State crippled children's programs developed with Federal aid under the Social Security Act. In some parts of the country boarding homes are used in the care of mentally deficient children and to some extent for delinquent children.

In many States and communities the limited funds available for boarding care and the regulations governing payment unfortunately make it impossible to provide foster-family homes for many children who need such care. In many instances the rates paid for board cannot possibly cover the actual cost of proper maintenance. This is true in both private and public agencies. Rates of board should be determined through study of actual costs of providing maintenance required for children of varying ages and needs, with special attention given to those whose physical or mental condition necessitates added expenditures for proper care.

Child-placing services should be entrusted only to workers who understand the needs of children and who are experienced in the selection and supervision of foster homes. Lack of such skill may involve grave dangers to children; and the number of children assigned to each worker should be small enough to permit careful attention to the needs of each.

Foster care in a family home or institution should be preceded by social service to determine whether such care will be to the child's best interest and what type best suits his needs. If a child must be removed permanently from his home because of neglect or other injurious family conditions which cannot be corrected, such provision should be made for him as will not only serve his present need but also safeguard his future. Most of the children who are given foster care return to their own people; their relationship to parents or other relatives should be safeguarded while they are receiving foster care. When necessary, effort should be made to rehabilitate the home so that the child may return to the family group as soon as conditions in the home and his own development make this desirable. To sum up:

*Foster care should be utilized only after due consideration has been given to the possibility of maintaining the child in his own home under proper conditions.*

*When care in a foster-family home or institution is found to be desirable it should be accompanied by work for the rehabilitation of the home unless the child's welfare necessitates permanent severance of family ties.*

### **Public and Private Responsibility for Child Care.**

Institutions and agencies conducted under private auspices have furnished a major part of the institutional and child-placing services that have been available in the past. Much of this private care has been provided through arrangements with public officials or courts, maintenance of children being paid in whole or in part from public funds. In many communities such arrangements have not been adequate to insure the welfare of the children whom they are designed to serve. Children have been made public charges and have been placed in the care of private institutions or agencies at public expense with no assumption of responsibility by the public officials for the child's well-being. Frequently private institutions and agencies have been expected to accept any children placed in their care by public officials, regardless of whether they are equipped to provide for the particular needs of the children. On the other hand, public departments have often assumed responsibility for maintenance payments for children over whose acceptance or discharge from care they have had no control.

The relative place of public and of private agencies in social services for children, particularly foster care in institutions or in family homes, has brought about some differences of opinion among leaders in child welfare that do not lend themselves to complete reconciliation in planning for an ideal future program. There has persisted among special ethnic and denominational groups a strong desire to retain general guidance of the care of their dependent children rather than to entrust them to nonsectarian or governmental bodies. The public has given wide acceptance to the principle that children who are deprived of their natural homes shall receive foster care in homes or institutions of their own religious affiliation. The history of continuous activity of many private children's agencies over a long period of time and their large financial investments, especially in the case of institutions, have established a type of vested interest that is quite independent of the denominational interest in maintaining privately conducted institutions. Much devoted service, life-long commitments, and a variety of sacrifices ungrudgingly brought to the service of children by the supporters and workers of private agencies have earned them the gratitude of the community. Technical improvements and experiments and a determination in many private agencies that these children shall not be doomed to lower standards of life or a more thwarted future than their luckier fellows have brought well-earned leadership to the representatives of these private agencies. Historically, too, certain types of service were first developed under private auspices.

Nevertheless, in many areas, especially rural areas, private service is not available. Even in cities it is not developed on the basis of community-wide recognition and provision for child care. Moreover, certain difficulties have gradually developed that have made too great dependence on private agencies precarious. The question has naturally arisen as to how much control public authorities should be obligated to exercise over the expenditure of tax funds and whether such funds ought not to be expended by public bodies if supplied by them. Except possibly during the earliest years of the history of foster care, private funds have not been sufficient to carry the burden, and tax resources have been drawn upon in increasing amounts. A very large proportion of the children under care of private agencies—both institutional and extramural—are supported by public funds. In some organizations that function entirely as private agencies, available private funds are so negligible that these organizations are virtually disguised public agencies but outside public control.

On the other hand, sufficient suitable institutions and agencies under public auspices are not now available to care for the children requiring care away from their own homes. Consequently this Conference recognizes the ultimate public responsibility, but implicitly approves the current utilization of private institutions and the allotment of public funds to them. It holds that:

*The public department represents the State in its relations to the child and his family; it cannot delegate to others the legal and moral obligation for seeing that the child is protected in his family relationships and that he receives care adequate to his needs, growth, and future, whatever be the sources from which this care may have to be drawn.*

With reference to this responsibility of the public agency, the Conference has adopted the following recommendation:

*Where public funds are paid to private agencies and institutions, they should be given only in payment for care of individual children whose admission to service has been approved by the public agency and who remain its responsibility. Such payments should be made on a per capita, per diem basis and should cover as nearly as possible maintenance costs. If service is needed by the family while the child is in foster care, there should be a definite understanding between the public-welfare department and the private agency as to which is to render such service.*

It is generally conceded, however, that despite the enormous contribution of private agencies to child welfare, some of them have in time come to be in some respects an obstructive force in the development of an adequate program of child welfare. Anxious to continue their activities, some of them have discouraged the exercise by public authorities of their responsibility for child care. A substantial body of opinion among social workers,

therefore, would like to see the continued utilization of private children's agencies to care for children at public expense diminished or discouraged. Their point of view was presented at the Conference as follows:

"In the past it has been the practice, and it is at the present the practice, for the public authority to rely on the private institutions or agencies and to contribute largely to the cost of their administration. We are aware of the fact that so long as this practice prevails, there will be inevitable differences in standards of care given, and the public will be deterred from developing a comprehensive service providing care for all who need that care.

"We realize that the principle of using public funds only for public services cannot be immediately applied; but we commend the principle of public funds in public hands, allowing the public authority discretion to use the services of private institutions and agencies of satisfactory standards which provide their own funds for the services they wish to have utilized."

At any rate the present situation requires comprehensive planning and implies, to that end, that the welfare department shall participate, together with schools, health agencies, courts, recreational agencies, private children's agencies, and public-spirited citizens in community planning for child welfare. Advisory committees and voluntary associations of citizens are indispensable for creating public interest and for assisting the public-welfare department in developing friendly public opinion and in maintaining high standards of work. In the larger communities the private children's agencies, with their boards of directors, executives, and staffs, can make it part of their fundamental policy to help in the formation of public opinion and the development of necessary citizen support.

### Some Social Services of Pressing Importance

Certain special phases of social service for children will require considerable attention during the next few years, if the improvement with respect to them is to be commensurate with the seriousness and the difficulty of the problems presented. These include the treatment of juvenile delinquency and the care of the mentally deficient.

#### *The Problems of "Delinquent Children."*

Among the earliest groups of children to claim public attention were those whose behavior brought them into serious conflict with the school and the standards and requirements of community life. The methods of work of the agencies that have been established to deal with them, chiefly the training schools for juvenile delinquents and the juvenile courts, although established upon the legal premise that the duty of the State in respect to children was "to save" and not to punish, in most instances

have lagged far behind scientific knowledge concerning child behavior and the factors which condition it. Admittedly, those reactions to environment which are comprised in the loosely defined term "delinquency" are among the most baffling of our social problems. Yet recent years have brought considerable understanding of the reasons that make particular children delinquent and of ways of treatment that give promise of improvement in individual cases and may help to prevent delinquency in others. But this recent knowledge has penetrated only in a meager way the procedures of many courts and institutions dealing with delinquent children.

In general the principal fault in the orientation of our work in this field has probably been that of overconcentration. Work has been centered on the delinquent child, and the agencies promoted have been those devoted to the child who is already delinquent: The court, the institution, probation. Many of these agencies if not most, moreover, fall far short of the standards of personnel and program generally accepted as needful, and their services are far from available to all children whom they are designed to serve. But a change of emphasis is called for as well; a change toward the less dramatic, less tangible, less measurable, but, in the end, more practical task of prevention, and failing prevention, early recognition, diagnosis, and treatment of problems of personality and behavior. Prevention, however, is not the function only or even chiefly of juvenile courts and training schools. We know now a number of danger points or threats to child behavior that are conducive to delinquency. This is where prevention must begin. If it is true that the conditions of family life are the principal builders of conduct, then the break-down or low level of family life is to be prevented, if possible. That means first a livelihood for the family, then normal surroundings, education of parents in the nature of child behavior, and psychiatric and social services available for helping people to deal with deep-seated problems of friction, unhappiness, and insecurity within the family. It means, also, effective teamwork between parent and school, family and church. If the school as the principal educational instrument dealing directly with the child has all the potentialities for character building that educators attribute to it, then flexible school programs, teachers with training that has made them sensitive to symptoms of maladjustment, and the availability of suitable guidance personnel in the schools are important preventives of juvenile delinquency.

Both in family and in school, symptoms of threatening delinquency may make themselves manifest in the behavior of the child at a relatively early age. Although encouraging experience in child guidance and community services is available, not yet have comprehensive and practicable plans been fully worked out, by which these symptoms may be recog-

nized, competent assistance called in, and treatment offered at a stage before overt delinquency has occurred, or serious deterioration of the child's personality has set in. Here is a pressing field for more light and experimentation, more bold and far-reaching planning.

Community life as a whole, pride in its institutions, the spirit of its public services, the tone of its politics and public administration, the character of its commercial and other leisure-time activities, the beauty and cleanliness of its streets and its parks, the quality of its housing and of its cultural provisions, the adequacy of its relief and medical services—vague as the relationship may seem—are community preventives of juvenile delinquency. We have learned in recent years to recognize the reality of causes and the possibility of prevention, so that what seemed earlier to be mere generalities or pious wishes may be parts of a practical and workable program, by which the functions of juvenile courts and training schools may be reduced in relative importance. Without minimizing the latter, the efforts of coming decades need to be geared to the more widespread prevention of delinquency that can be achieved through facilities for early diagnosis, through helping families, guiding individuals, improving schools, and enriching community life in general. These are the methods that offer real promise for reduction of the problems of delinquency.

In considering these problems, the question naturally arises as to the place of the juvenile court in the community. Roughly speaking, the juvenile court has exercised two functions: Chiefly, that of dealing with children referred to it because of delinquency or neglect and with persons associated with such delinquency or neglect; less generally, that of determining the eligibility of a child, presumably dependent or in need of special treatment or service, to receive public support, and of determining questions of custody, guardianship, and the responsibilities of adults for the support and care of children.

In many communities the juvenile court was the first public agency to be concerned with the welfare of children; hence, the court often assumed responsibilities for social protection and care which are outside its proper functions as a judicial agency. Because of the absence of more appropriate public-welfare agencies equipped for service to children, juvenile courts in many States until recently have been legally charged with the administration of mothers' aid or mothers' pension laws, and in some States this function still remains with the court.

The court is often utilized for authorizing public support for dependent or handicapped children. The court should be relieved of this responsibility, which is not a judicial function but an administrative function that properly belongs to the public-welfare department. If in addition to the dependency or need for public care a problem that requires judicial decision is involved, court action should be sought in relation to that specific problem.

Social service *is* needed, however, in connection with court action in many cases of delinquency and neglect. It is also needed, for example, in cases of divorce and legal separation when custody or responsibility for support of children must be adjudicated, in cases of adoption, determination of paternity and support of children born out of wedlock, and in cases of desertion and nonsupport of families. Court action in such cases, whether in the juvenile court or in some other court, should be preceded by a careful social investigation of all the factors affecting the welfare of the child and his parents, to be undertaken by a case-work staff attached to a court or by that of the public-welfare department or some other community welfare agency.

Successful administration of a juvenile court depends, first of all, upon the qualifications and personality of the judge. He should have adequate legal training, but, above all, he should understand children and have knowledge of social conditions and community services. To do his work effectively, however, the judge must have the assistance of qualified social case workers. In the larger communities the court may need to have its own probation staff made up of such workers. In less populous areas social service to children coming to the attention of the court may well be part of the service of child-welfare workers in the public-welfare department.

A serious weakness in provision for children classified as "delinquent" is the fact that many children without serious behavior problems are sent to institutions intended for the training of delinquent children. Often these children, especially those from rural communities, have not had the benefit of skilled assistance from a social case worker or child-guidance clinic, which might have made unnecessary their commitment to an institution. For them the training schools may be just catch-alls, commandeered in the absence, within the community, of agencies or of courts adequately equipped for social service. Moreover the same institutions cannot serve adequately the needs of both young children and older youth, and cannot provide training adapted to the mentally deficient and to the mentally normal child. For this reason, among others, the development of small, specialized institutions for children with serious behavior problems, with provision for transfer of children from one to another of these, is preferable to the development of large institutions.

Because institutional experience is an interlude in the life of the child and should not be a separate and unrelated experience and because the institution is a part of community life, the activities of the training school in the social, educational, religious, health, and recreational phases of the child's life should be closely related to corresponding activities of other community agencies. Social case workers are needed on the staff of the institution to share responsibility with local agencies for preparing the child and his family for his return to community life, and for helping in the necessary adjustments after his return.



Within the immediate objectives of institutional training it is difficult to produce results without suitable buildings and equipment providing comfortable and attractive living and sleeping quarters; adequate diets adapted to the needs of growing children; and opportunities for recreation, education, health supervision, medical care, and psychiatric service, provided directly by the institution or available in the community.

In institutions for the training of delinquent children, as in any educational enterprise, the staff is of far greater importance than the physical equipment. Cottage masters and matrons, teachers, social workers, recreational leaders, religious advisers, and other professional personnel should all be prepared by education and experience to provide sympathetic understanding and wise guidance.

Because the children in training schools usually present educational problems of greater seriousness than those of the general population of the public schools, the academic and vocational training in these institutions should meet at least the standards set by the State for public schools and should be adapted to boys and girls in special need of social adjustment and vocational guidance. Individualized treatment should be insisted upon, and every advantage should be taken of the group life in institutions to make that group experience a positive and planned educational asset.

It is inevitable that the per capita cost of care by institutions will rise as States and localities plan for a more adequate and effective program for the care of children with personality and social problems, for such programs result in only the children with the most serious problems, requiring the most expensive treatment, being sent to the training school. But it should be remembered that the resources of the public may be wasted in an economy in which a low per capita cost, instead of the welfare of the child, becomes a first consideration.

### *State and Community Provisions for Mentally Deficient Children.*

The history of public concern for the mentally deficient begins with the development many years ago of special institutions for their care, chiefly under State auspices. Changes were made in the laws relating to the insane and the mentally deficient, both in the penal law and in laws dealing with training and custodial care. Within recent decades the concept of standards of intelligence and the association of such standards with occupational and educational planning began to be recognized as having practical significance. In the decade of the World War and in the following decade the use of intelligence tests entered school, Army, college, vocational training. The study of pathological or abnormal phenomena threw much light on normal and superior intelligence. The study of the problem of feeble-mindedness led to the use of intelligence tests in planning for children of normal intelligence and even for adults. Psychometric methods were being improved and their concepts extended into various fields of behavior or

personality—temperament, emotional maturity, special endowments and skills, problems of the interrelation of emotional, intellectual, and social aspects of ability and behavior.

In time successive studies brought out the fact that the earlier emphasis upon identifying and labeling mental deficiency, upon setting up rigid classifications (especially those of numerical intelligence quotients), upon isolating and institutionalizing persons so classified was being pushed beyond limits that were scientifically sound or socially useful. Mental limitation rather than mental defect is often found; appropriate education and suitable employment in the community are frequently the best treatment for persons with such limitations.

Because relatively little progress in the development of comprehensive programs for dealing with the problems of the mentally deficient has been made in the last decade, and because such programs need to be closely related to the general organization of State and community welfare services, with emphasis on assistance to children who can be helped within the normal surroundings of home and community life, the subject has been given special attention by the present White House Conference.

Nation-wide or State-wide data of dependable accuracy concerning the extent of mental deficiency are not available, but various surveys have established at least the probability that mental deficiency is far more prevalent than was heretofore supposed. The number of children classed as mentally deficient and cared for in institutions is estimated to be approximately 40,000.<sup>11</sup> Another 100,000 are members of special classes for mentally retarded children in urban communities. The number unrecognized in the general population cannot be usefully estimated. Besides those who may be regarded as "mentally deficient," a large number of children are in the borderline and "dull normal" groups, and many of them require special attention to assist them in effecting educational and social adjustments in childhood and vocational and social adjustments in later life.

Mentally deficient persons may be divided roughly into three groups: Those of very low-grade intelligence, who are almost wholly dependent on others for physical care; those requiring only social protection rather than actual physical care from parents and community; and those who under ordinary circumstances can lead fairly independent lives in the community, especially if they have been given appropriate educational and vocational training. A large proportion of the first group may have to be given permanent custodial care; many in the other two groups may profit by a combination of institutional training and supervised life in the community; still others, possibly a very large group, with suitable help and supervision, may live happy and usefully normal lives with their own families in their own communities.

<sup>11</sup> Most institutions are overcrowded or have long waiting lists. Frequently a child found to be in need of institutional care must wait several years before he can be admitted.

Evidently, then, an intelligent program will comprise all needed help to the mentally deficient, from those who permanently may have to be custodial cases to those who are hardly distinguishable from "normal."

Early discovery of mental limitations or deficiency and careful diagnosis, so far as that is possible, of the capacity for mental growth are the foundation of an adequate program. At this early stage especially, it is important to assist parents in understanding the nature of the problems faced by their children. For children whose home conditions preclude proper care and protection, foster care may have to be provided. Many children of this type may still need assistance and guidance in their social relationships, even when they have attained chronological maturity.

At school modified curricula and appropriate pedagogical methods adjusted to their capacities are required; in part these may be provided through special classes. A carefully adjusted school experience, including and supplemented by vocational guidance and assistance in obtaining work, will be particularly helpful to such a child in facing later the serious problem of competing with other children in seeking a job when he reaches the employable age.

In a comprehensive program of care for these children nothing less than a State-wide plan, carried out through appropriate State and local agencies, can suffice. The major elements of such a program are well known.

Provision for early discovery and adequate diagnostic service for those mentally deficient children who are in need of special protection is of first importance. Along with this should go the kind of services that will assist parents in understanding and meeting the special problems of these children. Appropriate educational provision should be made for these children in their local school systems, with guidance and financial assistance from the State. Care and training in institutions or in foster homes will be needed for those children whose condition, or the circumstances within their homes, preclude proper care and protection by their own families, even with suitable educational adjustment made available in the school.

Supervision of the mentally deficient who may with some help carry on normal activities in the community should be a major element in the State-wide program, but, as yet, it has not been developed to a very extensive degree. Many such persons need never go to an institution; others may adjust to life in the community under supervision after institutional education and training. There is good reason to believe that the number who may benefit from such supervised life far exceeds the number that requires permanent segregation.

When continuing care in an institution is the only suitable treatment its availability is imperative and its management under State control seems most desirable. Despite the marked progress in establishing institutions for the mentally deficient during the present century facilities for the Nation as a whole are still woefully inadequate.

Finally, the program demands research and more research on distribution of cases, on diagnosis, on educational and treatment techniques, on complications arising in the psychological, medical, and social elements of the problem, and on ways of integrating into a well-articulated system the needed items of discovery, diagnosis, education, supervision, continuing institutional care, and research.

### *Programs for Physically Handicapped Children.*

In contrast to the problems of the mentally deficient child, gratifying progress is now being made toward a more satisfactory handling of the needs of the physically handicapped child, though much still remains to be accomplished. All States now have State-wide services, receiving Federal aid under the Social Security Act, for the medical and surgical care of crippled children and of children suffering from conditions that may lead to crippling. The services have been available chiefly to orthopedic cripples, but under amendments adopted in 1939 they are being extended in some States to children suffering from heart disease. As of June 30, 1941, the crippled children's programs were administered by State health agencies in 28 States, by State welfare agencies in 13 States, and by agencies of other types in the remaining States. Cooperation of local health and welfare agencies is utilized, but the programs in the main are administered directly by the State. In most States funds are still inadequate to provide for all children in need of care.

Nearly all States also have established institutions for the deaf and the blind, most of them having been in operation for many years. Such institutions, however, are primarily for the education of the children, and many of them make little provision for medical care or social service. This is evidently a serious gap in the program. Medical care and social service, as well as specialized education for deaf and blind children and for those suffering from impaired hearing and vision, should be developed. This could be done by the States, with Federal aid, along the general principles developed in services for crippled children.

Physically handicapped children should have the fullest possible opportunity for care and training in their own homes and communities. Social service which will help families to make the adjustments in family life required to meet the needs of handicapped children is an essential part of a program for such children. State aid to local school systems for special educational provision for the physically handicapped should be extended and brought into close relation with medical and social services for such children. But, as is the case with other types of special need, the State should include in its complete plans not only the provision of service for children brought to official attention, but also the task of locating such children, of bringing service and children together, and of seeing them through to the stage of selecting a vocation and preparing for employment.

## The Role of State and Federal Governments

Once the general principle has been accepted that the public authorities must exercise the ultimate responsibility for child welfare, and the local government has been recognized as the natural unit to administer that responsibility, why cannot the whole program of child welfare be left to the local community? What, if any, need is there to draw State and Federal governments into the system? This is a practical question, rather than one of theory, and it is on practical grounds more than on purely theoretical considerations that the roles of the State and Federal Government in child welfare are being defined.

The State is regarded as the practical unit for exercising the following functions:

- a.* To provide those services for which many local units are too small, the local administration of which would therefore be too costly and probably not very efficient. Examples are: Special schools for the deaf; schools for the blind; institutions for delinquent children; institutions for mentally deficient children. These services may be provided locally, but only in urban centers.
- b.* To define and establish standards of care and service, to supervise the quality of work performed by children's agencies; to collect and disseminate information; to carry on studies and research as to the extent of need for social services, methods of treatment, changes in practice and theory.
- c.* To stimulate thought and practice in the local services and help local communities learn from one another; to transmit to the field of social services the useful findings and advances in practice from the kindred fields of education, medicine, and administrative practice; and above all to help plan social services for all parts of the State.
- d.* To provide financial assistance to local units of government that will enable them to provide more adequately for services to children and to reduce prevailing inequalities in community services within the State.

Beyond the practical reasons for the State's exercise of these functions stands the fact that all legal power and responsibility which defines the place and right of parents and the obligations of the public authorities resides in the State. It is the State that enacts the laws relating to child welfare and permits or requires the expenditure of tax funds to this end, that enacts the laws that protect the child against neglect, abuse, and undue or too-early labor and assure to him the rights of education. In fact the whole base of the legal and financial structure of child welfare lies within the State government and makes that government the constitutional and

statutory power, as well as the practical resource, underlying the child-welfare program.

The State also is the cornerstone of most Federal activities relating to children. Primarily the Federal Government stands as a research, stimulative, and cooperating agency. It has also been able to function as a supplementary financial resource, to give aid to the States, and, through the States, to local governments. In the maternal and child-welfare programs, in aid to dependent children, in assistance to the aged and the blind, in much of its study and research program, the Federal Government represents the extension on a national scale of the supplementary functions exercised by the State with reference to local governments. Although some of the national services, such as, for example, the publication of research studies and informational bulletins by the Children's Bureau and the administration of Federal child-labor laws, may reach the local resident in any part of the country directly, the Federal Government is in theory and often in practice an extension of the fundamental system of State participation in the child-welfare program, while the operative level continues to be local—county and municipal.

In the light of these considerations the core of the proposals of this Conference with respect to State and Federal activities in the field of social services for children may be stated thus:

In each State the State welfare department should provide leadership and direction in the development of State and local programs for children, and financial assistance to local units of government; and should administer such services as cannot be provided appropriately in local units. It should have a division responsible for promoting the interests and welfare of children, with definite appropriation for this purpose.

The Federal Government should enlarge its child-welfare activities so as to make them more fully available to the States and through the States to local units of government and private child-welfare agencies and parents. Federal services should include the following:<sup>12</sup>

- a.* Publication of child-welfare information.
- b.* Research concerning the nature and extent of child-welfare problems and methods of service and care.
- c.* Information and advisory service to authorities and agencies responsible for developing and administering child-welfare programs.
- d.* Leadership and funds for demonstration of service and development of methods of administration.

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<sup>12</sup> In addition to direct administration of certain functions relating to children, such as the child-labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

- e. Grants to States for assistance to needy children in their own homes and for such other forms of service to children in need of special protection as experience may prove to be necessary.

### *The State Program.*

These are the general principles for State and Federal activities in the field of child welfare. However, certain further details of the program may profitably be set forth at this point.

Child-welfare programs of State welfare departments differ widely in historical development, legal foundation, financial support, and personnel. No State has yet made complete provision for the discharge of all its legal and social responsibilities for children. As a condition for doing so, State services for children should be developed in relation to other parts of the State welfare program, particularly the administration of public assistance. This is, for obvious reasons, of fundamental importance.

As in many other fields of government service, so also in the supervision of institutions, child-placing agencies, and foster-family care enforcement of the laws should be accompanied by provision for guidance in developing good standards of care in utilizing the services provided. Legal control alone can give little assurance that children will be cared for under proper conditions. The encouragement of participation by child-caring organizations in the development of standards, and aid in bringing these organizations into cooperative relationships with other community agencies, will accomplish far more than legal enforcement, even though insistence on observance of legal requirements is a basic part of a State child-welfare program.

Among the most important legal and administrative functions in child welfare is the provision of adequate legal and social safeguards in matters relating to adoption and to other methods of transferring parental rights and obligations. The safeguarding of adoption has been the subject of special study during the past few years, and many States have made notable progress in providing social as well as legal protection. Nevertheless surrender of parental rights without court action or without other adequate safeguards is still often permitted, and many courts having jurisdiction in guardianship cases are not equipped to give consideration to the social needs of children.

It should be an important function of the State welfare department to give advisory service with reference to social legislation. Comprehensive studies of child-welfare legislation have been undertaken in many States during the past 20 years, and efforts have been made to unify and modernize the whole body of laws relating to children, but the results frequently have been fragmentary. In some States archaic laws still remain on the statute books; in others, needed legislation in regard to certain aspects of child

welfare is entirely lacking. In most States and localities, however, lack of funds and personnel to carry out the provisions of laws already in existence is even more serious than lack of adequate legislation.

State assistance in developing local service has been greatly extended since 1930 by the acceptance in many States of responsibility for the administration of relief and by their participation in the Federally aided programs of public assistance and child-welfare services. Under the child-welfare-service provisions of the Social Security Act, Federal funds are granted through the Children's Bureau to State welfare departments for developing certain State and local services. These take the form of State encouragement and assistance in child-welfare organization in areas predominantly rural and in other areas of special need, as well as the development of direct local services in areas predominantly rural, part of the cost being paid by Federal funds. All the States are actively cooperating in this program, under plans developed jointly by the State welfare agencies and the Children's Bureau, and with the assistance of Federal funds. Workers experienced in community organization and in dealing with children's problems are employed by the State welfare departments for consultation with local officials—county, town, and school—and citizens' groups concerned with the needs of children and the ways in which services may be provided. Such service may lead to the employment of child-welfare workers for local service on a demonstration basis.

Experience in rural child-welfare programs has already shown that valuable results may be accomplished with this type of State encouragement and assistance. Yet it is hardly to be conceived that the State can effectively extend its protection to all children in need in every part of its jurisdiction unless it accepts general responsibility for sharing, when necessary, in the financing of local service while conserving wherever possible the principle of local participation and administration. In cities the need may not be so great for aid in supplying service to individual children as for help in developing plans for the fuller utilization of resources already available.

A measure of financial assistance to local units for aid to dependent children in their own homes by the end of 1940 was provided in 41 States, the District of Columbia, and Hawaii, with the cooperation of the Federal Government, under the Social Security Act. Twelve States give no State aid for general relief, which is an indispensable foundation for adequate service to children, and in many other States the amount of State aid is grossly inadequate. (See *Economic Assistance*, p. 134.) Relatively few States give financial aid to local communities for other kinds of social service to children, except as such aid is available for local demonstrations under the Federal child-welfare-services program.

For the full development of a State program of service to children, some form of interdepartmental organization is needed, through which



the interests and activities of the State departments concerned with welfare, health, and education of children may be brought into closer relationship. Examples of the importance of such coordination are found in the medical and social care and the education of physically handicapped and mentally deficient children.

### *The Federal Program.*

Federal action with reference to children has taken three major forms—educational promotion of the development of child-welfare measures, financial aid to the States in carrying on child-welfare services, and aid to dependent children. In addition, important services to children as part of the program of unemployment relief, such as school lunches, nursery schools, and recreational projects, have been developed by the Work Projects Administration, and the work of many other agencies of the Federal Government is more or less directly related to child welfare.

For more than a quarter of a century the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor has carried on educational work on a wide front. It has served as a center for research and information and for consultation service which are made available to parents, teachers, physicians, social workers, and public officials.

Since the first White House Conference in 1909 the first plank in child-welfare programs has been conservation of home life through assistance to needy families and other forms of social service. The Social Security Act of 1935 for the first time authorized Federal grants to State welfare agencies for aid to dependent children in their own homes.<sup>13</sup> The scope of this form of public assistance has been broadened since the passage of that act, and the number of children receiving aid has increased almost threefold. Further extension of this program has been made possible by 1939 amendments to the Social Security Act. The Social Security Board, in administering these grants, has a great opportunity for guiding the development of standards of assistance and of social service which should accompany this form of aid.

Federal grants to the States for child-welfare services, administered through the Children's Bureau under the Social Security Act, have brought to light hitherto unrecognized conditions of child neglect and have strengthened State and local child-welfare organizations to meet these conditions. On June 30, 1940, approximately 735 child-welfare workers paid in whole or in part from Federal funds were employed in State welfare departments and cooperating local units. Figures for 45 States, Alaska, and Hawaii for August 1940 showed approximately 41,000 children receiving service—children who were dependent, neglected, illegitimate, mentally defective, physically handicapped, in danger of becoming delinquent. More than

<sup>13</sup> See Ch. VII, Economic Assistance, for a discussion of this Federal program, which is administered by the Social Security Board.

three-fourths of these children were living in their own homes; less than one-fourth had to be provided for in foster homes or institutions.

Neither the language of title V, part 3, of the Social Security Act, which provides for Federal grants to States for child-welfare services, nor the annual appropriation authorized therefor (\$1,510,000) anticipated or made possible Federal aid for services in all the political subdivisions of the country. The program serves chiefly to promote the development of local service in areas predominantly rural, and in a minority of these areas funds are used mainly for salaries of workers. Maintenance of children who need foster care has been provided, when necessary, by State or local funds, not from Federal sources. Emphasis has been placed on qualified workers and on provisions for their further professional preparation.

The importance of research, which has been the unique and chief contribution of the Children's Bureau through the past quarter of a century, becomes more evident with each advance in the acceptance of social responsibility for children. It affords the basis for the development of sound public policy and for advisory and consultation service. The Children's Bureau has responsibility for research in all phases of child welfare. The Bureau's appropriations for research and for reporting the results of studies in both technical and popular form have remained substantially the same during the past 10 years, however, and are no longer adequate to meet present-day demands for such service. Although the Bureau is able to avail itself of data arising from the studies and the administrative procedures of the Social Security Board, the Work Projects Administration, the Bureau of the Census, the Department of Agriculture, and other agencies, these resources impose greater rather than lesser responsibilities on the Children's Bureau for analysis and interpretation of material from the point of view of the child and the services he requires, and thus increase its potential usefulness in the research field.

We have entered a new era in the provision of social services for children. The nature and size of the problem have been recognized, and the need for expansion of the services now provided may be clearly seen. The importance of providing help in the first place by enabling parents to keep their children at home not only has been accepted but has been implemented by a variety of measures for giving economic assistance to needy families. To this end State and Federal governments have set up machinery for supplementing the resources of local communities. The limits have at last been recognized beyond which local bodies can supply neither funds nor administrative machinery equal to the task of comprehensive and efficient service. Similarly the limits of private benevolence are seen, and no longer does government shirk the theory or practice of public responsibility for assistance and social service to children. The advances in technical knowledge have become available for this public service, and the cooperation of private agencies may be had in enriching, supplementing, and

interpreting the work. The intimate relation between social services and other work for children through school, playground, health agency, church, and institution is recognized. There are reasons for hope, material for work is at hand, and the character of a more comprehensive program has been emerging with increasing clarity.

## Chapter XII

### Health

#### Trends in Modern America

APPRECIATION of the value of good health as a foundation for other good things of life is comparatively new in the modern world, but in the United States there is no longer need to argue for it. Along with the growth in appreciation—contributing to it and stimulated by it—great progress has been made in medicine, in sanitary science, and in administrative procedures for the control of disease and the protection of health. As a result of the interplay of these factors, together with a general advance in the standard of living, the health of the people of the United States has been getting better in the twentieth century at an unprecedented rate. Death rates have decreased sharply, the average length of life has increased, the amount of illness has diminished, and general vigor has increased. Even in the last decade—one of economic depression—the general death rate in continental United States has fallen 4 percent—from 11.3 per 1,000 population in 1930 to 10.8 in 1940.

Expressed in the terms of an actuarial “life table,” the improvement in health conditions between 1901 and 1938 added 13½ years to the expectation of life at birth. In other words, babies born in 1938 could be expected on the average to live to be 63 years old instead of 49, as at the beginning of the century.<sup>1</sup> They will live longer still if scientific knowledge and methods of applying it to health continue to advance, as there is every reason to believe they will do. The increased “life expectancy” affects, of course, not babies alone. Children and adults live longer now than at the beginning of the century. For white boys 5 years old the expectation of life was 7 years longer in 1938 than in 1901; for white girls of the same age, it was 9 years longer. White men 50 years of age, on the average, could expect to live a year longer in 1938 than in 1901; white women, 2 years longer.

Even under the adverse economic conditions of the 1930's improvements in health conditions added about 3 years to the expectation of life at birth. That this has been possible in the 1930's, when millions of the population

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<sup>1</sup> Figures on expectation of life are taken from tables for 1901-38 in *Statistical Bulletin of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company* (Vol. 21, No. 5, May 1940, pp. 2-5; New York) and *United States Life Tables, 1930* (U. S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, 1936).

have been dependent on relief for the necessities of life and other millions have existed precariously on the verge of dependence, is not evidence that poverty and hardship are salutary. Rather, it is testimony to public esteem of the importance of health, to the soundness of past educational and protective measures, and to the successful efforts of public-health officials, voluntary agencies, and relief administrators to reduce the adverse effects of privation on health.

It is in the years of infancy and childhood that the greatest saving of lives and improvement of health have been accomplished since the beginning of the twentieth century and in the decade just ended. The measures for accomplishing improvement in the early years of life are relatively simple and inexpensive, relatively easy to put into effect; and they give high returns, not only in immediate benefits but also in laying the foundations of future health and vigor. The urgency to continued effort rests in the large number of deaths and diseases that are preventable and in the fact that all sections of the population thus far have not shared equally in the gains.

## Health Status of the Children of the United States in 1940

### *Maternal, Infant, and Child Mortality.*

Until birth the child's chances of life and healthy development depend, aside from hereditary factors, almost entirely on the health of his mother. Throughout his first year, indeed, throughout his preschool years, his mother is the chief protector of his health. Maternal mortality,<sup>2</sup> therefore, is the first item to look at in considering the health of children. At present some 9,000 women (9,151 in 1939; 8,876 in 1940) die each year from conditions directly due to pregnancy and childbirth. The 1940 rate, 38 per 10,000 live births, is the lowest rate on record for the United States. From 1915 to 1929 the rate (in the expanding birth-registration area) fluctuated between 60 and 70 per 10,000 live births, except in the year of the great influenza epidemic and the 2 years following, when it rose to 92, 74, and 80, respectively. Each year since 1929, however, it has fallen, from 70 (in 1929) to 67, 66, 63, 62, 59, 58, 57, 49, 44, 40, and (in 1940) 38.<sup>3</sup> That was a reduction of 46 percent over a period of extreme and widespread hardship. If the rate of 1930 had prevailed in 1940, there would have been 15,815 maternal deaths in 1940 instead of 8,876. Even after this gratifying reduction, it is estimated that almost half of these deaths are preventable.

The 1940 rate of 38 maternal deaths per 10,000 live births was not uniform throughout the country (chart 34). In general the high rates were

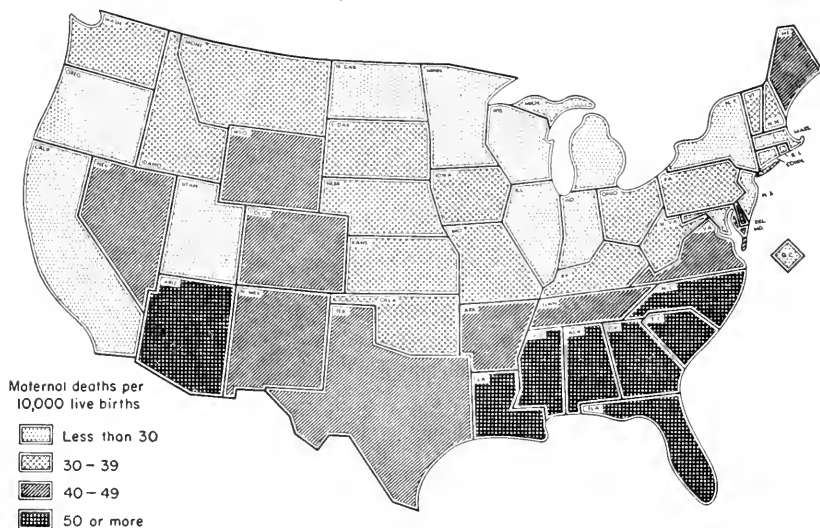
<sup>2</sup> "Maternal" and "maternity," in the current vocabulary of public-health discussions, are used in a limited sense, to refer to motherhood during pregnancy, at childbirth, and for a short time after confinement. "Maternal mortality" in this usage corresponds to "deaths directly due to conditions of pregnancy and childbirth" in the vocabulary of vital statistics.

<sup>3</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census: Vital Statistics, Special Reports.

in the Southern States, where facilities for good medical and hospital care are not available to the extent they are in other parts of the country. The State with the lowest rate was North Dakota, with 17—a new low record. Minnesota, Rhode Island, and Oregon had low rates also. At the other end of the scale, South Carolina had the highest rate, 68, and Florida, Mississippi, and Alabama also had high rates.

There are no adequate records of loss of life between conception and birth, but there is reason to think that this period is the most precarious of all.<sup>4</sup> It would not be possible to obtain complete records for the

**Chart 34.—Maternal mortality rate in each State; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from U. S. Bureau of the Census.

first 3 months after conception, and it would be difficult even for later months. We do have records (incomplete, we know, for some States) of the number of babies born dead. In 1940, a total of 73,688 stillbirths were reported, a ratio of 31 to every 1,000 babies born alive.<sup>5</sup> In the judgment of the medical profession a considerable number of the stillbirths are preventable.

In recent years about 2,250,000 babies have been born alive in the United States each year (2,265,588 in 1939; 2,360,399 in 1940). A large number of them do not long survive this critical experience; many die on the very first day of life (32,870 in 1940) and as many more (34,996 in 1940) die before they are a month old, making a loss in the first month of about 3 percent of all the babies born alive. A large proportion of these early

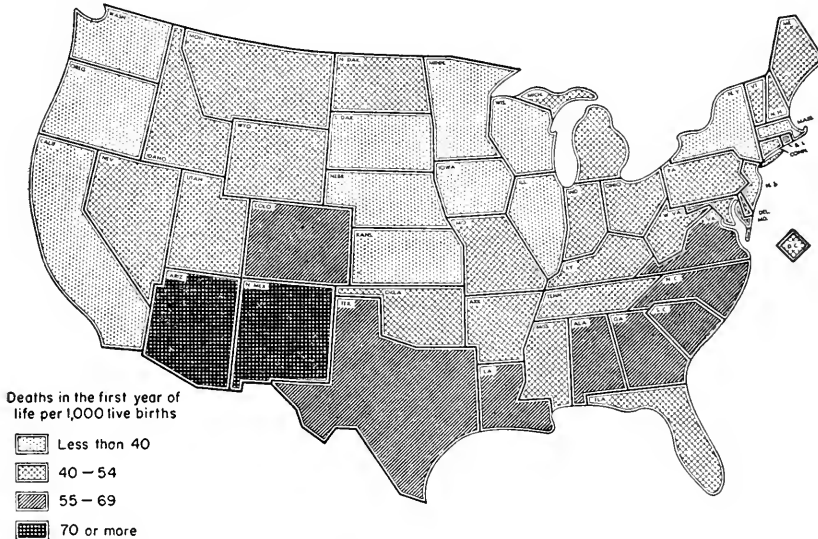
<sup>4</sup> Frederick J. Taussig (*Abortion, Spontaneous and Induced*, p. 26; C. V. Mosby Co., St. Louis, 1936) estimates that 681,600 abortions occur annually in the United States. This represents about 300 for every 1,000 live births.

<sup>5</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census: Vital Statistics, Special Reports.

deaths is due to premature birth or to some cause antedating birth. Of those who live through the first month, more than 40,000 (43,118 in 1940) do not reach their first birthday, chiefly because of pneumonia, influenza, diarrhea and enteritis, and whooping cough. The death rate in the entire first year of life in 1940 was 47 per 1,000 live births. Rates for individual States ranged from 33 in Oregon to 100 in New Mexico (chart 35). Among white babies the rate was 43; among Negro babies, 73 (chart 36).

There has been practically no decline in recent years in the death rate on the first day of life and only a slight decline in the death rate under

**Chart 35.—Infant mortality rate in each State; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from U. S. Bureau of the Census.

one month. Forty percent of the deaths during the first month and many that occur during the next 11 months are preventable. Some authorities, indeed, do not hesitate to say that "on the basis of our present knowledge, if enthusiastically and competently applied, an infant mortality rate of 25 per 1,000 could be achieved."<sup>6</sup>

Information on infant mortality, that is, on deaths of babies under one year of age per 1,000 births per annum, is available for some cities and States for many years, but records have covered the entire country only since 1933. In the short period between 1933 and 1940 the rate for the country has fallen from 58 to 47, a reduction of 19 percent. Just as current rates for individual States vary widely (chart 35), and in general are high in the South, so the amount of improvement from year to year also varies. In

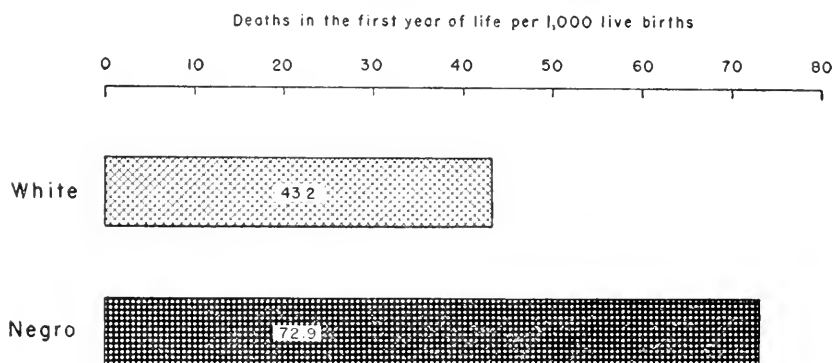
<sup>6</sup> Geographic Distribution of Declines in Infant Mortality. *Statistical Bulletin of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company*, Vol. 20, No. 6 (June 1939), p. 3.

general it is not the States with the highest rates that show the greatest reduction.

The leading causes of infant mortality at present (as indicated by the records for 1940)<sup>7</sup> are prenatal and natal conditions, 58 percent; respiratory diseases, 17 percent; gastrointestinal diseases, 9 percent; and epidemic and communicable diseases, 3 percent. Since 1930 death rates of babies for gastrointestinal diseases have decreased about one-half and those for respiratory diseases about one-fourth; but the rate for prenatal and natal conditions is only one-sixth lower than in 1930.

After the first year and until the approach of adolescence the problem of keeping alive becomes progressively easier, under present conditions. In the early years of childhood (from the first birthday to the fifth) the

Chart 36.—Infant mortality rates, by race; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from U. S. Bureau of the Census.

principal dangers to life are (in the order of their importance) pneumonia, diarrhea and enteritis, influenza, motor-vehicle accidents, tuberculosis, congenital malformations, whooping cough, and diphtheria, which together account for more than half of the deaths at these ages. From 5 to 19 years of age, inclusive, almost half of the deaths are caused by motor-vehicle accidents, tuberculosis, diseases of the heart, appendicitis, and pneumonia.

Since 1930 there has been considerable reduction in the death rates of children past their first birthday. The death rates for four of the communicable diseases of childhood (whooping cough, diphtheria, measles, and scarlet fever) and also for pneumonia (one of the leading causes of death among children) have at least held to the marked gains of previous decades. Death rates from accidents to children 5 to 14 years of age have decreased. The total number of deaths from all causes among children 1 to 14 years of age, inclusive, fell from about 77,500 in 1933 (the first year

<sup>7</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census: Vital Statistics, Special Reports.



for which figures are available for the entire country) to 47,900 in 1940, a decrease of 38 percent.

### *Illness Among Children.*

Deaths imply illness or injury but do not reveal their amount. For each death from almost every disease and for each death caused by accident other cases recover. The ratio of cases to deaths varies for different causes and at different times for the same cause. Moreover, many diseases, injuries, and physical defects that ordinarily do not cause death do incapacitate those who have them more or less seriously for varying periods of time. For a true picture of the health of children we need more than death rates alone. The National Health Survey of 1935-36<sup>8</sup> and other extensive studies made in recent years have given us more information than we had before about the prevalence and severity of illness and other physical handicaps.

We know from these studies that children are ill more frequently than grown persons (until they reach the age of 65) but that their illnesses do not last so long and, after the first year of life, are less likely to be fatal.<sup>9</sup> Among children under 15 the frequency rate of illness was 225 per 1,000, compared with 171 at all ages and 129 among young people 15 to 24.<sup>10</sup> The average duration of disability per disabling illness, on the other hand, was 26 days among children under 15, compared with 57 days at all ages and with 41 days in the age group 15 to 24 (chart 37).<sup>11</sup>

The characteristic diseases of childhood are infectious. They account for four-fifths of the disabling illness at this period of life.<sup>12</sup> Among babies born during the year of the survey (1935-36) in the families covered, the major

<sup>8</sup> This survey was conducted by the U. S. Public Health Service. With the cooperation of the Works Progress Administration, records of illness and medical care for a 12-month period were obtained for about 2,800,000 persons, including more than 500,000 children, in 83 cities in 18 States and selected rural areas in 3 States.

<sup>9</sup> The Disabling Diseases of Childhood, by Dorothy F. Holland. *American Journal of Diseases of Children*, Vol. 58, No. 6 (December 1939), pp. 1157-1185. "Disabling illness" included all deaths, hospital cases, and permanent gross impairments, and all other diseases that caused disability for at least 7 consecutive days in the year. "Disability" was defined as inability to pursue usual activities—play by young children, school attendance by children of school age, work by adults.

<sup>10</sup> Among children 1 to 14 years of age the highest frequency rate, 305, occurred in the group 5 to 9 years old; for little children, 1 to 4, it was 251; and for the older group, 10 to 14, it was only 153.

<sup>11</sup> Days of disability per person (assuming, that is, that the whole volume of disability was distributed evenly among all the individuals in the groups) averaged 9.83 for all ages, 5.93 for children under 15, and 5.31 for young people 15 to 24. In other words, the average child under 15 is disabled for about 6 days out of the year; the average young person 15 to 24, between 5 and 6 days; the average person in the population of all ages, about 10 days. For persons 65 and over, the average is about 5 weeks.

<sup>12</sup> Acute communicable diseases of childhood were responsible for 105 of the 225 disabling illnesses per 1,000 children under 15, acute disease of the respiratory tract for 74, major chronic diseases and orthopedic impairments for 9, diseases of the digestive system for 8, all other diseases for 18, and accidents for 11. Of the communicable diseases, measles occurred most frequently (1935 was a "measles year") in each of the 3 age groups of the children between 1 and 14 (in the cities of 100,000 population and over). Tonsillectomies and adenoidectomies, influenza and grippe, and tonsillitis were reported more frequently in the 5- to 9-year-old group than in any other age group; colds, pneumonia, and bronchitis among the children 1 to 4. Ear and mastoid diseases also affected particularly the children 1 to 4 (14.5 cases per 1,000). Accidental injuries increased in frequency with the age of the children, accidents outside the home increasing from age to age more than enough to counterbalance the decline in accidents at home.

cause of disabling illness was the group of acute diseases of the respiratory system.

In the matter of illness children living in the large cities (100,000 and over) have a great advantage over their contemporaries in small cities (under 25,000) and some advantage over those in cities of intermediate size (25,000–100,000).<sup>13</sup> Comparisons with rural areas are not available. The disadvantage of the small cities is apparent in each of the four large geographic areas for which the data were analyzed. It is particularly marked in the rates for acute communicable diseases, which are responsible for nearly half the illnesses among children. A high frequency of measles and mumps largely accounts for the excess. The medium-sized cities also have higher rates than the large cities for illness from acute communicable diseases in all four geographic areas, but the excess is less than that of the small cities.

Prevalence of disabling illness due to acute communicable disease among children under 15, in short, seems to vary inversely with the size of the city. Since human contacts, and hence exposure to sources of infection, tend to multiply as population increases, the existing situation seems illogical. It suggests, therefore, that the reason for the differences may lie in differences in public control of infection and provision for prompt treatment. This presumption is supported by the fact that the excess in the small-city rates is marked in each income group and is little greater in families that had received public relief during the year than in families with incomes of \$3,000 or more.<sup>14</sup>

Although the records of the National Health Survey established a definite relation between economic status and volume of disability, analysis by age indicated that income is a less important factor in the health of children under 15 than in the health of older persons, particularly persons between 25 and 64 years of age.<sup>15</sup> Whether poor families have more illness because they are poor, or whether they are poor because they have more illness is a question that may always be asked and never be answered, but the close association of poverty and ill health and their interaction each on the other is indisputable.

Among children under 15, however, gradations in volume of disability do not follow gradations in economic status in an orderly fashion.

<sup>13</sup> A thousand children under 15 in cities of 100,000 population and over had 212 disabling illnesses in the course of a year, but in cities of 25,000 to 100,000 the rate was 220, and in cities of less than 25,000 it was 302.

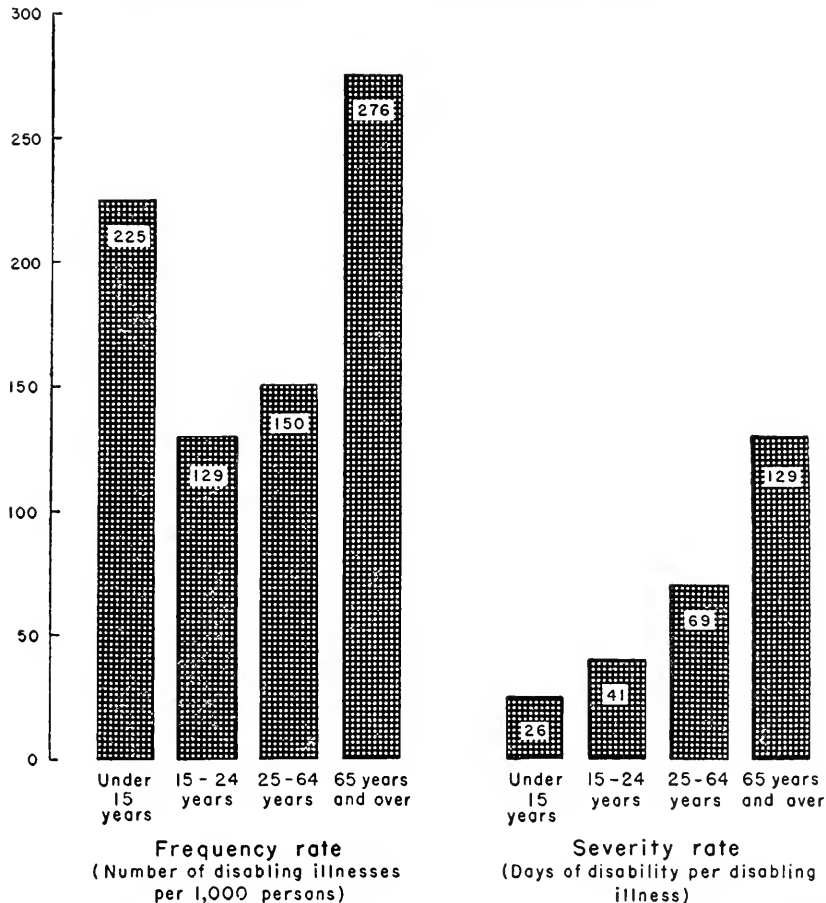
<sup>14</sup> In the medium-sized cities the excess over the rates of the large cities is least among the relief families and greatest, as in the small cities, among the self-supporting families that had incomes between \$1,000 and \$2,000.

<sup>15</sup> *Disability from Specific Causes in Relation to Economic Status*, p. 1–7. National Health Survey: Sickness and Medical Care Series, Bulletin No. 9. U. S. Public Health Service, Washington, 1939.

Rates are adjusted to a standard age distribution because persons in families in the upper-income groups are on the average older than those in families in the lower-income groups. The average number of days of disability per year per person (for all ages) was 17.4 in families that had received some relief during the year; 10.9 in families that had not received relief but had less than \$1,000 income; 7.9 in families with \$1,000 to \$1,500; 7.0 in those with \$1,500 to \$2,000; 6.9 in those with \$2,000 to \$3,000; and 6.5 in those with \$3,000 to \$5,000 and also in those with \$5,000 and over.

Children in relief families, to be sure, reported the highest average number of days of disability, but next came the children in families of highest income, \$5,000 and over; the lowest was for children in families having incomes of \$1,500 to \$2,000. Illnesses due to different causes seemed to be

Chart 37.—Frequency and severity of disabling illnesses among white persons in 83 cities, by age; United States, 1935–36<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Includes illnesses of 7 consecutive days or longer, confinements, fatal illnesses, and illnesses treated in a hospital regardless of duration. Based on data from *The Disabling Diseases of Childhood* (*American Journal of Diseases of Children*, December 1939).

distributed in different ratios among the several income groups. The average number of days of disability due to infectious diseases was the same for the children in relief families and those in families having incomes of \$5,000 and over, and was least for the children in self-supporting families having incomes of less than \$1,000. With respect to respiratory diseases, on the other hand, the highest disability rate for children under 15 was in

the families of highest income; the lowest in families with incomes of \$1,000 to \$1,500.

Does all this reflect a more liberal construction of "disability" in families in a comfortable economic position and in those under the supervision of relief authorities? Whether a cold, for instance, is allowed to cause "disability" (in the sense of keeping a child from his usual activities for a week) may depend on the standards of parents and teachers rather than on an absolute measure of the severity of the illness, just as a grown person is apt to decide whether or not he is "sick enough" to stay at home for a week according to whether he can or cannot "afford" to do so.

Special interest attaches, perhaps, to the extent of permanent orthopedic impairments.<sup>16</sup> Among the white urban children covered by the survey the mean duration of these disabilities was about 8 months. When the cases of impairment that caused no incapacity or that disabled the child for less than 7 consecutive days were added the total prevalence rate of permanent orthopedic impairments in children under 15 was 49.5 cases per 10,000 white urban children. Relatively few (14 percent) of the impairments that caused no incapacity involved loss of fingers, toes, arms, hands, feet, or legs. Of the much larger number of crippling impairments not involving loss of members, the great majority were caused by congenital defects and poliomyelitis.

It is estimated that there are now between 400,000 and 500,000 children under 21 years of age who are crippled by disease or conditions such as poliomyelitis, tuberculosis of bones and joints, birth injuries, injuries due to accidents, and congenital deformities, who may be benefited or entirely cured by prompt and continued treatment. In addition, an equally large number of children are crippled as a result of heart disease. Several million school children have defective vision requiring correction with glasses, and 1 percent of all children have strabismus (squint), which to be treated successfully requires prolonged and special care. More than one-third of the blind persons in our population lost their sight in childhood, many because of neglect of simple precautions at birth. More than a million and a half school children have impaired hearing; and at least two-thirds of all school children have dental defects.<sup>17</sup>

### Factors in Determining a Program

A program for protecting and improving the health of children involves, at any time and in any place, general measures to limit the spread of disease and to restore to health the sick of all ages; provisions for the care of women during pregnancy and at childbirth; special measures to provide medical and nursing supervision for children from birth through adolescence

<sup>16</sup> *The Disabling Diseases of Childhood*, p. 1170.

<sup>17</sup> *White House Conference on Children in a Democracy: Preliminary Statements*, pp. 198-199.

to assure them professional services as needed, to immunize them against infectious diseases, to discover and correct their individual defects; and measures for spreading throughout the population practical knowledge of a useful kind about prevention of disease and promotion of health.

At any time and in any place the extent of such a program and its precise content depend on the state of scientific knowledge, the supply and competence of physicians and nurses, the adequacy of hospitals and clinics and public-health services, the character of the relief program, and the attitude of the public as reflected in appropriations for and utilization of resources.

Increasingly it becomes a community program, in which public authorities, private agencies, and individuals cooperate; in which schools, churches, recreation centers, and relief agencies make their contributions to the objectives that are the primary responsibility of health departments and hospitals. Increasingly it becomes accepted that the health of all children is the concern of every person in the community. Conversely, as science adds costly devices to aid in diagnosis and treatment, every family is increasingly dependent on the common resources for its use of them.

No father nowadays, no matter how wealthy and well informed and solicitous, could protect his children from infection if there were no public-health services. He might conceivably isolate them on a large estate with its own water supply and maintain a staff of sanitarians and bacteriologists to inspect all incoming food and other products, a cordon of guards who would keep out outsiders or stop them at the border, and a disinfecting station where those allowed to enter would be examined, rendered aseptic, and if necessary quarantined for a while. To watch over their health and development and care for them in illness, this individualistic father would have to maintain on his estate not merely a personal physician and nurses, but a hospital and a laboratory equipped with all the latest diagnostic and therapeutic aids, as well as specialists and technicians. Even then occasions might arise when it would be necessary to call in consultants.

Such a program for the health of children obviously is fantastic. It would not be effective even for the few children for whom it might be applied. It may be compared with the measures used by feudal barons in the Middle Ages to make themselves safe from robbers, by shutting themselves up in moated castles guarded by retainers. Later it was seen that it would be more effective, and more easily accomplished, to shut up the robbers and dispense with private fortifications and armed forces; and now we have come to realize that it would be cheaper and more satisfactory to do whatever is necessary to prevent men from becoming robbers.

### ***Basic Principles.***

For all children, health depends in the first instance on common services supplied by the governmental agencies for all persons regardless of economic

status and paid for from the public treasury. Health administration must be a comprehensive program, planned for all the people. Beyond these fundamental common services, ability of the individual to pay for personal services becomes a factor, although all still are dependent on public authorities or voluntary associations—commercial or philanthropic—to provide many of the necessary services and facilities. Some families can meet their full share of the cost of the health and medical services their children need. Others can meet part of it. Many cannot pay anything. The basic principle of a program for the health of children is that all the essential facilities and services should be within the reach, in every sense, of all children, however the cost is distributed.

Standards in facilities and services change as basic knowledge is extended, as methods for applying that knowledge are developed, as one disease after another is brought under control, as the level of professional skill rises, and as the education of the public in matters of health progresses and its sense of responsibility sharpens. Standards can never be static or rigid. They have advanced appreciably since the White House Conference of 1930, notwithstanding—in fact, partly because of—the unfavorable economic conditions of the decade.

#### *Recent Advances in Basic Knowledge.*

Medical science has made notable progress in knowledge of how to reduce the illnesses and deaths of mothers in childbirth, of how to prevent deaths of infants, of how to feed and protect the child during the first critical years of his life, and of how to immunize against certain diseases of childhood. New chemicals have been discovered to treat some of the diseases to which children are subject, and valuable new diagnostic methods have been developed. In some instances (as in the case of pneumonia) new methods of treatment by the use of serums and new chemical agents developed by research (such as sulfanilamide and sulfapyridine) have reduced the cost of care and have improved its quality.

Much has been learned about various important phases of the life of the child: The mental development and social behavior of infants; the conditions affecting the growth and development of babies before and after birth; ways of reducing stillbirths and premature births and asphyxia in the newborn infant; the treatment of diseases due to the disturbances of metabolism and to abnormal conditions arising from improper functioning of the endocrine glands. As a result of recent advances in knowledge the close relationships between physical and mental health have also been re-emphasized.

The role of the vitamins in the protection of health and the interrelationships between dietary essentials have been clarified. Tests have been devised for detecting certain specific vitamin deficiencies even in the latent

stage. Requirements for each of the dietary essentials, including some of the vitamins, have been estimated under varying conditions of age, sex, and activity. Progress has been made toward more satisfactory methods of appraising the nutritional status of the individual child. Search for the cause of dental caries has gone forward, and, although the exact cause has not yet been determined, advances have been made in methods of control and in other aspects of preventive dentistry.

Much has been learned also about the prevalence of illness in the United States, its amount and severity, its incidence at different ages, in different places, in different elements of the population, and at different economic levels; about the amount and character of medical service available; and about the extent of visual and auditory handicaps among children, the condition of their teeth, the amount and kind of food they eat, and the kind of houses they live in.

### *Progress in Application of Knowledge.*

Application of the new knowledge and the old has proceeded at an accelerated pace. Public authorities at all levels of government have given more attention than ever before to the health of children, as they have realized the disastrous effects likely to accompany the economic depression.

Through the Social Security Act of 1935, with the amendments of 1939, and the Venereal Disease Act of 1938, the Federal Government has greatly stimulated extension and improvement of the general programs of State health departments, the organization of local health agencies on a full-time basis, the extension and expansion of maternal and child-health services and of services to crippled children, and the development of State programs for the diagnosis and treatment of syphilis.

Local relief programs as a rule have given precedence among applicants to families with children and, generally, have gone as far as they could—though frequently that has not been far—toward supplying sufficient food of the right sort and helping the mothers to use it to the best advantage. Less frequently, they have provided medical care when necessary and in other ways have looked after the health of the children in families on relief.

Federal relief programs, such as the distribution of “surplus” commodities, the assistance given to school-lunch programs, community gardens, canning and sewing projects, classes in domestic economy, programs for medical and nursing care in the home and for supplying housekeeping aides in homes where the mother is incapacitated, have made substantial direct contributions to the health of children. Less directly, Federal work programs have promoted health by adding to hospital accommodations, building sanitary privies, draining malarial marshes. Federal and local housing programs have cleared out disease-breeding slums and erected thousands of healthful dwellings.

*Professional Training.*

In the training of physicians more attention has been given to preventive pediatrics and obstetrics, although many physicians still are graduated with too little clinical experience in these fields, in view of the fact that the average general practitioner spends a major part of his time in obstetric practice and opportunities for graduate experience are still too limited. A number of State departments of health, with the aid of grants under the Social Security Act and assistance from the medical societies, have conducted short courses in obstetrics and pediatrics for practicing physicians living at a distance from medical centers. They have also given opportunities to physicians, nurses, and other health personnel for postgraduate study of the principles of public-health administration and related subjects. Administrative aspects of the maternal and child-health program have received attention in medical schools and schools of public health. In September 1939 the first American Congress on Obstetrics and Gynecology was held, under the auspices of the American Committee on Maternal Welfare.

*Education of the Public.*

Accomplishment in education of the public is hard to measure, except over a long period. Results of the movement for the prevention of infant mortality, which began early in the century, are amply apparent in the reduced death rates. In the past decade, educational programs in the interest of the health of children have been available to the general public and to selected portions of it, particularly to school children of all ages and to parents, prospective and actual. A large number of organizations have participated—public and voluntary, National, State, and local—with a great variety of methods. State and local departments of health have extended their educational work materially since Federal funds have been available for the purpose. Special programs affecting children have been directed chiefly towards maternity care and health supervision of infants, preschool and school children; control of tuberculosis, syphilis, and gonorrheal ophthalmia; and the prevention of blindness and deafness, of rheumatic heart disease, of orthopedic crippling conditions, and of accidents in the home and on the street.

Interest and action have been stimulated by several conferences of national scope. A Child Health Recovery Conference, called by the Secretary of Labor in October 1933, resulted in the organization by State health and relief agencies of nutrition and public-health-nursing projects for children, under the guidance of the Children's Bureau, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, and the Civil Works Administration, and indirectly in the creation of child-health councils by a number of States. In December 1936 a conference was held by the United States Public Health Service to arouse interest in a national program for the control of venereal disease.



A National Conference on Better Care for Mothers and Babies, held under the auspices of the Children's Bureau in January 1938, resulted in the organization of the National Council for Mothers and Babies, to serve as a clearing house of information regarding maternity care for the 60 national organizations that make up its membership.

The educational movements of the twentieth century for the control of diseases conspicuously destructive to life and health of adults are of great importance for the health of children, directly as well as indirectly, by keeping many parents alive and well, who otherwise would die or be disabled. The earliest of these movements, a movement for the prevention of tuberculosis, has seen the death rate in the United States from all forms of the disease fall (in the expanding death-registration area) from 201 per 100,000 population in 1900, when tuberculosis was accurately known as "the captain of the men of death," to 46 in 1940.<sup>18</sup> As tuberculosis affects particularly persons between 20 and 45 years of age, this means that many thousands of children who under the conditions prevailing in 1900 would have lost mother or father or both before reaching maturity have been able to enjoy the advantage of parental care.

Success in reducing mortality from cancer, the object of a movement organized a little later, has not been conspicuous. The rate has almost doubled since 1900, but this apparent increase is believed to be due mainly to continuously improving methods of diagnosis and to the fact that people live to be older now and this disease occurs mainly in the older age groups. Among men 25 to 44 years of age and among women 25 to 34 there has been little increase since 1910, and among women 35 to 44 there has even been "a significant decrease" since 1920.<sup>19</sup> It must be remembered, of course, that as compared with tuberculosis, means of control are still limited, although tangible results in the avoidance or postponement of death from certain types of the disease are beginning to show.

The movement for the prevention of venereal diseases, heavily handicapped when it started some 30 years ago by the "conspiracy of silence," has had a great impetus from the provisions of the Federal Venereal Disease Act of 1938. Although these diseases are not conspicuous in mortality tables, they are very prevalent; and they cause extensive ravages in health and well-being. They affect babies and children severely in various ways. It has been estimated by the United States Public Health Service that 60,000 babies a year are born with congenital syphilis.<sup>20</sup>

### *A National Program.*

The National Health Conference of July 1938, sponsored by the Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities, endorsed a national health program designed to meet existing deficiencies

<sup>18</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census: Vital Statistics, Special Reports.

<sup>19</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census: Vital Statistics, Special Reports (Vol. 9, No. 11).

<sup>20</sup> *Shadow on the Land*, by Thomas Parran. M. D., p. 275. Reynal & Hitchcock, New York, 1937.

in the Nation's health services "with reasonable adequacy" within 10 years. A step—albeit a short one—toward putting into effect some of the recommendations (such as the expansion of Federal aid to the States for general public-health and maternal and child-health programs and services to crippled children) was taken by the 1939 amendments to the Social Security Act.

In the light of the progress that has been made in knowledge, health education, and governmental provisions, a program for the health of children during the coming decade obviously will have important new assets. We know more about the health, growth, and development of the child. Therefore, practical objectives are higher. We know also, more definitely than ever before, how great the discrepancy is between medical knowledge and its availability, especially in the poorer parts of the country and among certain groups of the population. There are more resources, both of money and of trained personnel, that can be used for the protection and the promotion of the health of children. There is more support in public opinion. A program for the years to follow 1940 should be not merely different in detail but much more ambitious than any in the past.

## Present Program: Standards and Provisions

### *For Population of All Ages.*

Fundamental to a program for the health of the child is a complement of basic public-health services in each appropriate local area (city, county, or district), organized under the direction of a qualified health officer who gives his full time to the position and who has a staff appropriate in number and training to the size and type and needs of the community. It is patent that special attention to children cannot be fully effective unless the health of adults also is protected and general sanitary measures are in operation.

Although great progress has been made under the provisions of the Social Security Act in developing county and district health departments, less than half of all counties and an even smaller proportion of cities had in 1940 a full-time health service with the minimum staff of health officer, public-health nurses, sanitary officer, and clerk.

Administrative units with a population of less than 15,000 rarely have the resources to support a reasonably adequate, modern health service. It is hard to say just how much adequate service should cost. Some idea of a "standard" may be formed, however, by any community on the basis of the authority of the American Public Health Association, which holds that an expenditure of at least \$2 per inhabitant per year is necessary.<sup>21</sup> Some of the larger cities approximate that standard. In the smaller cities and rural counties, part-time personnel and an insufficient budget are

<sup>21</sup> *Public Health Administration in the United States*, by Wilson Y. Smillie, p. 357. Macmillan Co., New York, 1940.

still the rule. As of June 30, 1940, only 44 percent of the 2,400 rural counties had well-organized health agencies under full-time health officers.<sup>22</sup> A considerable part of the population of the country and a larger part of its area still lack any organized local public-health service. In the authoritative pronouncement of the Technical Committee on Medical Care of the Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities: "Preventive health services for the Nation as a whole are grossly insufficient."

If preventive health services are to be effective, there must be not only public-health authorities but also facilities for the care of the sick—physicians, nurses, hospitals, clinics—and the facilities must be within reach, geographically and financially—of all who need them, when they need them, wherever they live, and whatever their income. At present, according to the conclusions of the Technical Committee on Medical Care, "one-third of the population," including persons of all grades of income, "is receiving inadequate or no medical service."

For all economic ranks facilities are more ample in the large cities, where the supply and the average grade of professional skill are high and where specialists congregate; where physicians have at their command every possible aid for diagnosis and treatment; where clinics, visiting-nurse services, tax-supported and privately supported hospitals, give the poor (including the "medically poor" to some extent) most of the essentials of service; where sometimes a public-welfare department provides at least a minimum of medical care for the families in its charge; and where private social agencies supplement in various ways what the official agencies do.

In small cities and rural areas facilities are inadequate or even lacking, and provision for persons who cannot pay for treatment is meager and haphazard. In many sparsely settled rural areas, where physicians, nurses, and dentists are few and where there are no hospitals, proper medical care is a difficult problem for rich as well as for poor. About 17 million persons—one-eighth of the population—live in 1,300 counties that do not contain a registered general hospital and are remote from metropolitan centers. In more than 500 counties the only general hospitals are small proprietary institutions. Only about 400 counties—about one-seventh of all—have local tax-supported hospitals.<sup>23</sup> In large urban centers there is one physician to every 525 persons; in towns of less than 5,000 (excluding metropolitan suburbs) there is one to every 1,350;<sup>24</sup> in rural areas the supply is even less. Concentration of dentists in urban centers is still greater.

<sup>22</sup> *Progress Reports on Maternal and Child-Health Services Administered or Supervised by State Health Agencies, year ended June 30, 1940.* Children's Bureau, Washington, 1941. (Processed.)

<sup>23</sup> Compiled by the U. S. Public Health Service from list of hospitals registered by the American Medical Association.

<sup>24</sup> *Distribution of Physicians in the United States* (Revision of May 1936), by R. G. Leland, p. 20. American Medical Association, Chicago.

These deficiencies in supply of professional personnel and facilities for treatment, like deficiencies in public-health services, are due largely to economic causes. Doctors, nurses, and dentists cannot make a living in poor and sparsely settled areas, even though they may be willing to forego the professional advantages of practice in a city. Such areas cannot support hospitals, clinics, and nursing services, either from local tax funds or from private philanthropy. Few of the residents can afford to secure needed medical care at their own expense.

In general, although disabling sickness is more frequent among the poor and lasts longer than among the well-to-do,<sup>25</sup> the poor receive less medical care. With respect to hospital treatment, to be sure, it was found by the National Health Survey <sup>26</sup> that the proportion was approximately the same among rich and poor in the large cities; but in smaller cities, although the proportion among the upper income groups, who were treated in hospitals, was the same as in the metropolitan centers, among the poor it declined progressively with the size of the city. Medical care in home, clinic, or physician's office, in contrast to hospital treatment, was consistently less in proportion to amount of illness among families on relief and with marginal incomes than among families in comfortable circumstances. Of the illnesses among the relief population canvassed, 15 percent received clinic care in the metropolitan centers, but only 2 percent in cities of less than 25,000, and 0.2 percent in the rural areas. Although the incidence of illness was about the same in the relief families as in those with marginal incomes but not on relief, the latter group received a far smaller amount of clinic treatment and of visiting-nurse service. They seem to be the most "forgotten" of all the "medically poor."

#### *For Mothers and Newborn Babies.*

Measures for the ultimate protection of the health of children are best founded, according to present standards, on care of the physical and mental health of young persons and on their education for parenthood. More specific and immediate measures begin with medical examination and advice for prospective parents before marriage and again before they enter upon the business of parenthood. Such examinations should include tests for syphilis and search for other transmissible defects and diseases.

Examination of the mother should discover any diseases or malformations that might make pregnancy and childbirth dangerous to her life or health. The interval between pregnancies should be long enough to allow complete restoration of her health and vigor and to avert complications in a subsequent pregnancy.

From the time conception takes place the mother is the object of special concern. Proper care of the mother goes far to ensure for the baby satis-

<sup>25</sup> *Disability from Specific Causes in Relation to Economic Status*, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> *Proceedings of the National Health Conference, July 18-20, 1938*, pp. 51-52. Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities, Washington, 1938.

factory development, freedom from disease, gestation until term, and for both mother and baby safety during labor and delivery.

Standards of prenatal care require continuous supervision of the mother by a qualified physician and nurse through the entire period of pregnancy, with dental service and other special services as needed. They include physical examination, urinalysis, blood-pressure determinations, blood examinations, records of weight, test for syphilis (preferably before the fifth month, but later if it is not feasible to make the test before), other tests as indicated, advice on diet, on work, and on general care, and watchfulness for deviations from the normal course of events.

To ensure such care for the large proportion of women who cannot afford to pay for it as private patients, it must be provided by the community through prenatal clinics and nursing services, closely coordinated with hospital services. Community resources must also, if the means of the family are not sufficient, supply money for the food needed to meet the special demands of mother and child and must make possible freedom from overwork and anxiety. The number of families needing such direct economic assistance is far less than the number for whom medical and nursing care must be provided, but still is considerable.

Because of the importance of diet during the period of pregnancy to the future health of both mother and child, it should be one of the leading subjects of discussion with the mother by physician and nurse. At each consultation they should find out whether she is getting a sufficient amount of the minerals, proteins, vitamins, and the so-called protective foods, and they should impress on her anew the importance of these elements. They should determine the amount and kind of work she can safely undertake and should encourage her to do as much as will be advantageous but not to overwork. They should study her mental attitude toward the expected child and caution her and the rest of the family against the effects of shifting attention from the older children. They should make plans with her about arrangements for delivery, taking into consideration her attitude toward it and the conditions in the home, as well as her medical situation. In general the nurse helps her to understand and carry out the physician's advice, reports to the physician relevant facts about the home life, secures the aid of social agencies when needed, and makes preparations for suitable conditions and for nursing care at delivery, if it is to take place at home.

Whether the birth is to take place at home or in a hospital should be determined chiefly by the mother's condition or by the lack of facilities for proper care in the home. If hospitalization is advisable, it should be provided, whatever the economic circumstances. The family's ability to pay for it should not be the deciding factor.

Wherever the birth takes place, a physician qualified by training or experience should be in attendance, and he should be assisted by a nurse

who has had training in maternity care. An obstetrician and a pediatrician should be within reach for consultation, especially in case of operative interference or premature birth. A hospital accepting maternity patients (on other than an emergency basis) should maintain separate provisions for them—wards, delivery room, nursing staff, and facilities for isolation of infected mothers or infants; separate nurseries and nurses for the babies; equipment to care for babies born prematurely. It should have on its staff a qualified obstetrician (always to be consulted before any operative procedure) and a qualified pediatrician.

In view of the scarcity of physicians and other conditions in certain isolated rural communities the use of nurses adequately trained as midwives, under proper medical supervision, must be considered acceptable for the present. If an untrained midwife must be employed, whether in the country or in the city, examination of the patient by a physician early in pregnancy, supervision by a public-health nurse throughout pregnancy, and supervision of the midwife by a well-trained nurse-midwife are urgent requirements.

Reasonable standards require that there be at hand at the time of birth whatever is needed for the reception of the child, including facilities for emergency use, such as apparatus for resuscitation and blood transfusion. Labor and delivery should be so conducted as to avoid dangers to the child of asphyxia, narcosis, and injury to nervous system and viscera. Aseptic conditions are essential. The simple prophylactic treatment of the baby's eyes that may be needed to prevent blindness should always be applied. Soon after birth the physician should make a careful appraisal of the baby's condition.

Postpartum medical and nursing care in home, hospital, or clinic is generally recognized as standard for the mother. It is equally important that the newborn baby should be under the observation and care of a physician, preferably one with special training and experience in such care, and should have the ministrations of a specially qualified nurse. Maintenance of normal body temperature, protection from respiratory and skin infections, early recognition and treatment of deviations from the normal, supply of food and fluid in proper amounts are the chief requirements of the baby in its first days. Experts agree that mother's milk is the best food. Proper food for the mother during lactation is therefore important. For babies born prematurely prompt attention immediately after birth is imperative, and special provisions are necessary in hospital or home to prevent infection, to keep the delicate creatures warm, and to give them nourishment accurately adjusted to their needs.

It is of primary importance that there should be continuity and integration of professional supervision from the onset of pregnancy through delivery. Unnecessary complications too often arise simply because the physician attending the mother at delivery is not acquainted with facts

brought out by previous examinations. It is equally important that the services of obstetricians and pediatricians and other specialists should be available to aid the general practitioner with expert diagnosis and consultation whenever needed throughout his conduct of the case. A program of consecutive prenatal, delivery, and postpartum care, in which expert consultation and hospital care are readily available in complicated cases, should be the right of every mother.

Realization of these standards is very uneven throughout the United States, and practically nowhere is it complete. By December 1940, 20 States were requiring premarital examinations for syphilis, including a blood test, and 20 were requiring blood tests of all pregnant women.<sup>27</sup> Instruction in sex hygiene and advisory services for adolescents and young persons about to marry are increasing, but still reach only a small proportion of the population.

In the larger cities hospital facilities for maternity cases are fairly adequate, and prenatal clinics are now provided more or less adequately by health departments and private agencies, although in many places coordination with hospitals and their out-patient clinics is poorly developed, there is little planning for continuity of care, and inadequate planning for care of the newborn infant. Small cities and rural areas as a rule are meagerly equipped in all these respects, and in many places prenatal care, even of private patients by physician and nurse, is almost unknown. Less than 1 percent of the obstetricians certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology practice in communities of less than 10,000 population,<sup>28</sup> yet 50 percent of the babies are born in these smaller places.

Under the impetus of the Federal funds supplied by the Social Security Act, conditions in rural areas are improving gradually, but as late as June 1940 only 18 percent of the 2,400 rural counties had a medical prenatal clinic held once a month or oftener under the supervision of the State health agency, and nursing service at delivery was provided in only 56 rural counties.<sup>29</sup> In many places, among parts of the population in every place, and even sometimes among members of the medical profession there is no realization of the need for prenatal care. Mere provision of facilities does not accomplish results. But a prenatal clinic is one of the most effective educational agencies and is almost certain to create a demand for such services.

About half of the births in the United States occur in cities of 10,000 population or more. In 1940, 84 percent of the live births in cities took place in a hospital, and 14 percent more had a physician in attendance; only 2 percent were attended by a midwife. In rural areas, 25 percent

<sup>27</sup> Figures compiled by the Children's Bureau.

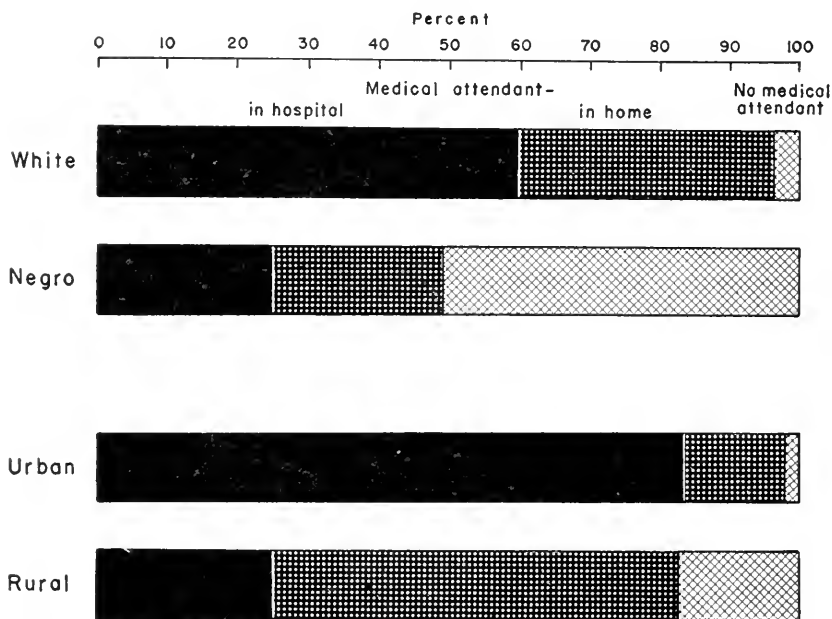
<sup>28</sup> Computed from the list of physicians certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology (Pittsburgh, Pa., September 1938).

<sup>29</sup> *Progress Reports on Maternal and Child-Health Services, 1940.*

took place in a hospital, 58 percent more had a physician in attendance; and 17 percent were attended by a midwife or other nonmedical person.<sup>30</sup> These figures indicate roughly the relative adequacy of medical facilities for childbirth in city and country (chart 38).

Of all the white babies, urban and rural, 60 percent were born in a hospital; of all the Negro babies, only 25 percent. A midwife officiated at 3 percent of all the white births and at 50 percent of the Negro births. The proportion born in a hospital ranged, for all babies, from 91 per-

Chart 38.—Attendant at birth, by race and by area; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from U. S. Bureau of the Census.

cent in Connecticut and the District of Columbia down to 14 percent in Mississippi (chart 39); for Negro babies, from 3 percent in Arkansas up to more than 85 percent in New York and in States with a very small Negro population. Briefly, the mothers of almost one-tenth of all the babies born in 1940 were not attended by a physician at childbirth, whether in a hospital or elsewhere, and the 218,000 babies born to these mothers probably did not have the benefit of medical care in the first critical days of life. That was one in 28 of the white babies and more than half of the Negro babies; 1 in 50 of the babies born in the cities, but 1 in 6 of those born in the rural areas.

<sup>30</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census: Vital Statistics, Special Reports.

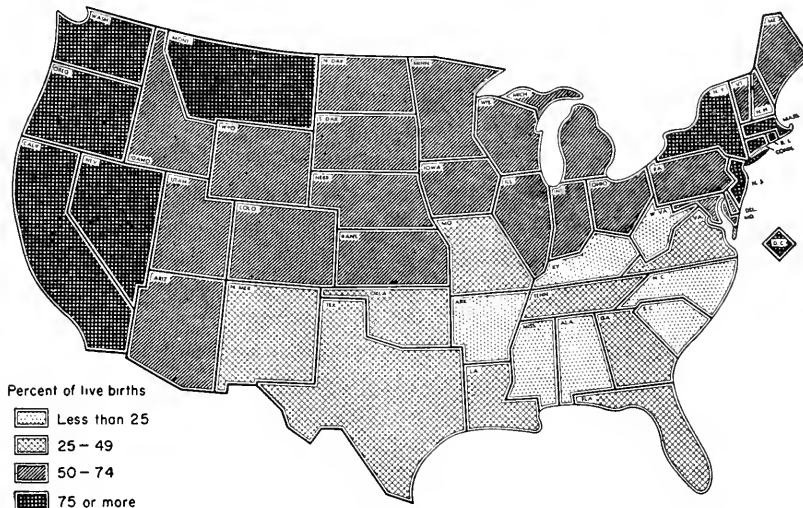


### For Children Under Six.

After the perilous experience of birth and the initial adjustment to life in the world, there comes a period of 5 years during which mental and physical development continues at a furious pace.<sup>31</sup> Promotion of normal growth, early detection of deviations from the normal, prevention or amelioration or removal of handicaps are the objectives in the program for these fundamental years.

Present standards for realizing these objectives demand continuous professional supervision, including general medical examinations with appraisal of nutritional status at stated intervals, periodic dental examinations, tests of vision and hearing, and examinations by specialists when indicated;

**Chart 39.—Percentage of live births that occurred in hospitals in each State; United States, 1940<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from U. S. Bureau of the Census.

also prompt treatment of illness and defects when discovered, and immunization at the proper time against those communicable diseases for which efficacious procedures have been established. In addition to these technical standards there is no less need for favorable conditions in the home for the formation of good habits, physical and mental, and practical instruction of parents—through every possible medium—in what is important for the well-being of the child, how to get it, and how to recognize problems that should have expert attention.

For the vast majority of children and their mothers the central feature of a program for these years should be the child-health center or conference,

<sup>31</sup> The normal course of development in these years, as learned by scientific study in recent years, is described in *The First Five Years of Life; a guide to the study of the preschool child from the Yale Clinic of Child Development, Pt. I*, by Arnold Gesell, M. D. (Harper & Bros., New York, 1940).

maintained by the local health department or a voluntary agency and conducted by qualified physicians with the assistance of public-health nurses. It should provide health supervision and nursing, nutrition, mental-health and dental-health services. There should be enough of these centers to be within reach of all mothers who cannot make individual arrangements for these professional services. The centers should have a close relationship with hospitals and clinics, social agencies, and public-welfare departments, and other resources in the community, in order to help their clients secure care as needed.

At this period of life nutrition and the formation of good habits are of preeminent importance. Unless children have food that is adequate in quantity and quality and unless they are willing to eat it and able to assimilate it, their growth is impeded, nutrition is interfered with, deficiency diseases develop in either a latent or a manifest form, infections are more frequent, behavior may be adversely affected, and other disorders may result. To assure a good diet, the mother must know what a good diet is and must have money and skill enough to provide it. Improper food is often the result of ignorance rather than of poverty, for in the greater part of the United States the essentials are not expensive. So important is proper food in childhood to the whole future of the individual that it is to the interest of the entire community to supply the necessary financial assistance when the family's resources are inadequate, to teach the mothers what they need to know about proper food, to keep track of the individual child's growth and development by the most approved methods of measuring nutritional status, and to search out the reasons when progress seems unsatisfactory, whether these reasons be physical, financial, psychological, or emotional.

Attention to mental health also is particularly important in the early months and years of the child's life. There is no disagreement today among authorities on mental health with the principle that a preventive program should be focused on children; but thus far a disproportionate amount of effort has been spent on older children who already present obvious problems. To catch the earliest indications of trouble, it is necessary that parents, as well as doctors and nurses and social workers, be on the alert to recognize them. In order to teach parents how to recognize incipient difficulties and how they should be handled, doctors, nurses, and social workers themselves need to be trained and prepared to carry this responsibility and to seek special assistance when needed. Many mental disturbances *can* be prevented, and a program that prevents them will save money as well as sorrow.

Child-health conferences or clinics through which education in some of these physical and mental health problems may be conducted and services

may be rendered are more numerous than prenatal clinics, but are no more evenly distributed. They exist in nearly all the large cities but in 1940 such clinics held as often as once a month and supervised by State health agencies existed in only a little over one-fifth (22 percent) of the rural counties.<sup>32</sup> Under the provisions of the Social Security Act the number in rural areas is increasing. Even in the best-equipped cities, however, there may not be enough of these resources or they may not be located conveniently for the families that need them. Few of them give parents as much help as they need in handling problems of behavior and of nutrition. Many of them are hampered by inadequate provisions for relief in the community or a lack of social services or of facilities for treatment. Child-guidance clinics for young children are still rare. Of education for parents, which is provided through a myriad of channels and which has been extended notably in recent years through W. P. A. projects, there can hardly be enough of the right kind.

### ***For School Children.***

When a complete and all-embracing program of prenatal and preschool care is in full operation, children will have a reasonable chance of entering school healthy and vigorous in mind and body, with good habits of eating and sleeping and a store of resistance to infection, free from physical defect or under corrective treatment, well adjusted in social attitudes. The program for their years in school will be relatively simple and relatively easy to provide. It will involve continued professional supervision, complemented by preventive and curative measures, but there will be less to correct and less to be cured. It will involve also continued attention to healthful conditions in the environment, at home, in school, and in public places. It will involve continued training in health-promoting habits and more formal instruction than in the preschool years, with changing emphasis as the years go by and introduction of new topics for specific instruction.

For the vast majority of children a program for the years from 6 to 16 or 18 centers in the school, as the program for the earlier years centers in the home and in the child-health conference. Individual records for the earlier years should be transferred, or at least made accessible, to the authority responsible for the following period of life. Present standards for a well-rounded "school health program" require healthful physical conditions in the school building; a healthful emotional atmosphere in the classroom; healthy teachers and other school employees; systematic instruction in health, personal and sex hygiene, and avoidance of accidents; physical education and facilities for recreation; medical and nursing supervision of the health of the individual child, including his mental health.

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<sup>32</sup> *Progress Reports on Maternal and Child-Health Services, 1940.*

The school program of supervision of the individual child involves, according to present standards, a thorough physical examination by a competent physician aided by a public-health nurse on entering school and again at 2- or 3-year intervals thereafter, with referral for intermediate examinations as recommended by teacher or nurse; periodic examinations of teeth by competent dentists, unless all such examinations are provided by the family; immunizations and tests for immunity when necessary, if not provided by the family; early detection of communicable diseases and other incipient illness; adjustments in the school program during convalescence from serious illness. It involves thorough tests of hearing and vision on entrance to school and at periodic physical examinations, with provision for remedial measures when necessary; special medical examinations of children taking part in competitive athletics; a determined follow-up program to secure care of teeth and the correction of other remediable defects and conditions unfavorable to health and development. In relation to mental health, informed watchfulness and guidance in the school are imperative, with use of whatever psychological and social services and psychiatric care may be available for children in need of special treatment.

Daily school meals are also desirable, since they may compensate to some extent for deficiencies in diet at home and can be an effective educational instrument.

The physical examinations of adolescents should always include investigation for signs of reactivated tuberculous infection, and should include an X-ray of the chest. The final examination in school should be the occasion for a review of the child's entire health history (for which a continuous record from birth should be at hand) and a leisurely interview in which the physician advises him about choice of occupation in relation to his physical equipment and about the general care of his health for the next few years.

Present physical conditions in school buildings vary widely, and an average would fall far below what is agreed to be a minimum normal standard. More attention than formerly, however, is being paid to temperature, light, furniture, general sanitation, and safety. In these respects schools are becoming much more comfortable, on the whole, and correspondingly more favorable to health. In many schools, however, a wide discrepancy still exists between what is taught the children—about cleanliness, for example—and the facilities provided for putting the lessons into practice.

Considerable attention has been given in some school systems to the health of teachers and other employees, but thus far less than to the physical environment; and it has been concentrated largely on protection of pupils from communicable diseases. Efforts to protect them from the dangers of mental or emotional disturbances in their teachers are sometimes thwarted by measures protecting the teachers in tenure of their positions.

Practically all the States have laws requiring the teaching of hygiene. The scope and quality of these laws vary from perfunctory instruction of a

limited range up to a comprehensive course extending through high school, including human physiology and hygiene, and taught by well-prepared teachers. By common consent responsibility for instruction in health, for recreation, and for physical education, as well as for maintaining a healthful environment in the classroom, rests with the education authorities.

Medical, dental, and nursing services are now generally recognized as being an important feature of school health supervision. They should be fully available to all school children through plans of administration that assure the cooperation of health and education departments, practicing physicians, and parents. There is the widest variety in the plans in operation and in the stage of development reached at present in different school systems. Responsibility for providing these services rests in some cities and in many rural areas with the health authorities; in some cities and in some rural areas, with the education authorities. In many places it is considered primarily an educational service; in many others it is considered primarily a health service. Parents are expected to arrange for the professional attention indicated on receiving a report of the showings in the examination, which they may do either through private practitioner or through clinic. However, the overwhelming number of children found to need dental work, together with the inability of a large proportion of families to pay for it at market rates and the insufficiency of free facilities, has led to the establishment of dental clinics by the school authorities in many cities. In a number of cities, also, they have set up refraction services and supplied glasses from special funds when parents could not afford to buy them.

Notwithstanding general appreciation of the importance of school health service, it is still in a rudimentary stage of development in many places, especially in small towns and rural areas. Inspections and examinations are often superficial and ineffective; they rarely take cognizance of health records for preschool years, frequently not even of previous records of examinations in school; there is inadequate provision for interpreting them to the parents and for securing indicated treatment. Responsibility for shortcomings is shared by insufficient appropriations, ineffective use of appropriations, lack of coordination between education and health authorities, insufficient facilities in the community for free treatment, and imperfect preparation of doctors, nurses, and teachers for this work.

Although increasing attention is being given to mental health, in most places programs are still grossly inadequate or entirely lacking. Frequently the facilities that do exist are not utilized as they might be. Only a minority of cities have child-guidance clinics, and these are engaged for the most part in treatment rather than in prevention.

In the interest of better nutrition, and also as an object lesson in food values, lunches for school children are now being provided from public

funds in many places.<sup>33</sup> Their extension has been greatly stimulated in the last decade by the depression and greatly facilitated in recent years by contributions of services from W. P. A. and of food from the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation (now the Surplus Marketing Administration of the Department of Agriculture).

#### *For Children After Leaving School.*

From the biological point of view full maturity is not reached, and therefore childhood does not end, until about the age of 24. Continued supervision of health and continued education in matters of health are needed as long as growth and development are factors in the individual's life. Boys and girls who go to college and university receive more or less of both in the educational institutions they attend and as a rule can find a way to pay for the care they need.

Although the proportion of young people who continue their school attendance beyond the secondary grades is increasing, it is still small in comparison with the proportion who leave school to go to work—or to try to go to work—at the ages of 18, 17, 16, or even 15. For these young people special safeguards are needed in addition to the provisions made for the general population: Legislative prohibition of employment in occupations particularly hazardous to their health and safety; and opportunities through clinics for routine physical examination, including X-ray of the chest, for medical care when needed, for premarital and preparental advice, for guidance in choice of occupation and in adjustment to work and to other responsibilities of adult life.

#### *Provisions for Treatment.*

Diagnosis avails little unless it is followed by appropriate treatment. When a child falls ill, when defects that can be remedied are discovered in the child-health clinic, at the school examination, or in any other way, the next step is to see that the child gets whatever care is needed. This involves the existence of properly equipped hospitals, clinics, laboratories, and convalescent homes; the presence, within reach, of qualified physicians and nurses for care of the child at home, and of dentists, oculists, opticians, orthopedic and other specialists; and provisions for making the needed care available for children whose families cannot afford to pay for it, and for effectively correlating health and welfare services so that medical advisers may be cognizant of pertinent conditions in the home and social workers may understand what is needed in the interest of the individual's health.

In large cities facilities for the treatment of children, like facilities for routine supervision of their health, are more fully developed than elsewhere. In small cities and rural areas children's hospitals are almost

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<sup>33</sup> In the discussion of recommendations by the Health Section of the White House Conference in January 1940, one member pleaded for giving "a White House breakfast" to every school child—a substantial meal, "not just a glass of milk and a cracker."

unknown, and general hospitals with special provision for children, including a pediatrician on the staff as consultant, are rare; out-patient clinics of any kind are few; and there is little or no provision for medical or nursing care of a sick child in its home. Of the pediatricians certified by the American Board of Pediatrics only 3 percent practice in communities of less than 10,000 population,<sup>34</sup> yet more than half of the children live in these communities.

The National Health Survey found <sup>35</sup> that in the white population of the cities studied children under 15 suffering "disabling illness" received care in a general hospital or care from a physician in home, office, or clinic less frequently than did youths and adults. They also received less care, as measured by visits from a physician and days in a hospital, and less frequently had a private nurse, although they fared relatively well with respect to visiting-nurse service.<sup>36</sup>

At each age period the proportion of illnesses treated in a hospital varied with size of city and was lowest in the group of smallest cities, but the difference was greatest among the children, who in general were less frequently hospitalized than older persons.<sup>37</sup> Variations in medical care received by children in these groups of cities are shown in chart 40.

Among these children under 15 years of age the medical care received in their "disabling illnesses" varied according to income, but not always in the way that might be expected. Only in respect to medical care (in, hospital and outside) in the smallest cities, is there an unbroken progression upward from relief families to families with incomes of \$3,000 and over. Among other groups notable exceptions are reported. In the large cities, for example, the proportion of children's cases treated in a general hospital was highest among relief families (24.3 percent) and decreased as income increased (to 16.1 percent in the families with \$3,000 and over). In the cities of intermediate size also it was highest among relief families (15 percent) but lowest (11 percent) among the self-supporting families with income of less than \$2,000, and then increased as income increased. In both groups of cities the proportion of children's cases that received physician's care outside a hospital was slightly higher among the relief families than among the self-supporting families with lowest income, and rose with income among the self-supporting families. Here again is proof that smaller communities for various reasons are less well equipped with

<sup>34</sup> Computed from the list of physicians certified by the American Board of Pediatrics (Winnetka, Ill., August 1938).

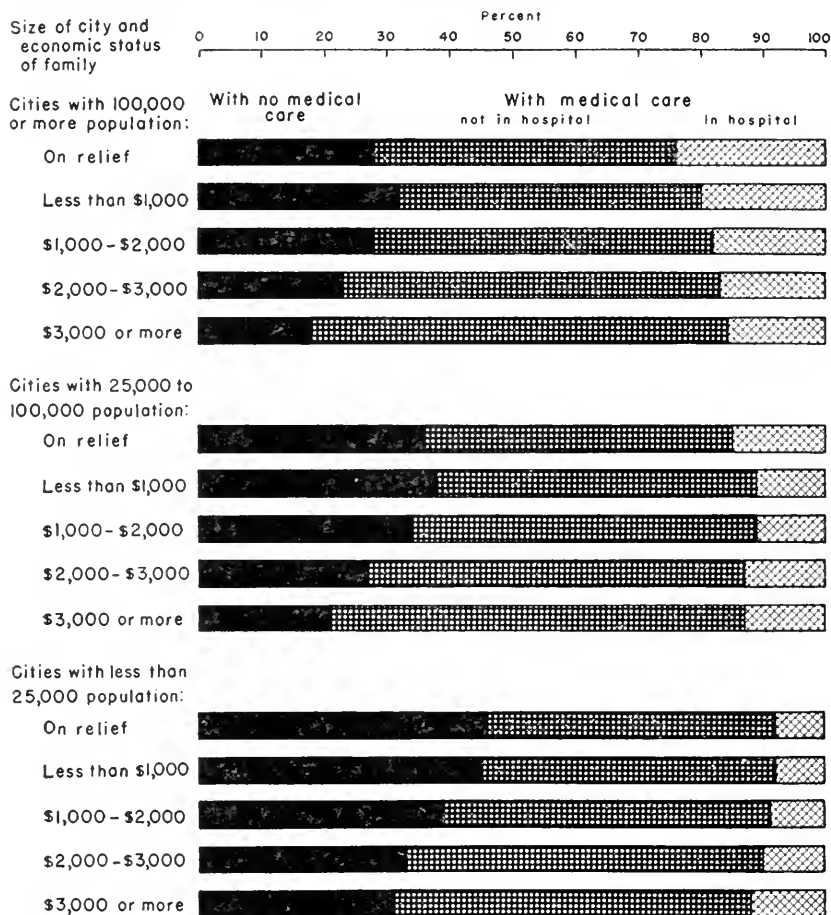
<sup>35</sup> *The Disabling Diseases of Childhood*, pp. 1171-1174.

<sup>36</sup> A visiting nurse attended these children in 13.9 percent of their disabling illnesses in the cities of 100,000 and over, 6.2 percent in the cities of intermediate size, and 9.2 percent in the cities under 25,000, compared for example with 3.0, 3.6, and 3.2 percent, respectively, for persons 65 and over, the age group that received the least visiting nurse service proportionately.

<sup>37</sup> In the large cities, the children received hospital treatment for 19.5 percent of their illnesses; in cities of intermediate size, for 12.5 percent; and in cities under 25,000, for 8.8 percent. For young persons 15-24, the age group most frequently hospitalized, the corresponding percentages were 44.1, 32.8, and 27.7.

needed facilities than the larger urban areas, and that this fact often is a complicating factor in the basic picture of opportunities varying with family incomes. It tends to penalize rich as well as poor.

Chart 40.—Percentage of disabling illnesses according to medical care received, size of city, and economic status of family among white children under 15 years of age in 83 cities; United States, 1935-36<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *The Disabling Diseases of Childhood* (*American Journal of Diseases of Children*, December 1939).

Time spent in the hospital by children who had hospital treatment was highest among relief families in all three groups of cities, and consistently higher among self-sustaining families with low incomes than among those with high incomes. No doubt the degree of comfort in the home is a factor influencing both the desire of the family to have the child return home and



the decision of the hospital as to when discharge is advisable. As to number of visits to or from a physician outside the hospital, however, the opposite relation to income prevailed. They are naturally kept to a minimum when they must be paid for out of relief funds or meager family resources.

In view of the definition of "disabling illness" (ftn. 9, p. 289), it may be assumed that medical care was necessary or desirable in the great majority of these cases. None whatever was received, either in hospital or elsewhere, in 27 percent of such illnesses in the large cities, 34 percent in the group of cities next in size, and 41 percent in the small cities. In the small cities the proportion that went without medical care decreased, as might be expected, with each step upward in economic status, from 46 percent among relief families to 26 percent among families with incomes of \$3,000 or more. In both groups of larger cities the range was somewhat less, and it was not among the relief families that the proportion without medical care was highest, but among the self-supporting families with lowest income.<sup>38</sup>

As to provisions for the correction of defects of vision and hearing, for the care of teeth, and for the treatment of other handicaps, physical and mental, estimates of their prevalence (p. 292) are ample evidence that provisions are far from adequate. In the vast majority of cases the handicaps under which children suffer are either present at birth or arise in the first 5 years of life.<sup>39</sup> To some extent they can be prevented. To a large extent they can be ameliorated by early treatment. The significance of these facts in relation to a program for the health and welfare of children is obvious.

### Next Steps

To bring the health of the children of America up to the level that the present state of scientific knowledge would allow, it is only necessary to close the gaps that yawn between present standards and existing provisions for the protection of health and care in sickness. Medicine and its kindred sciences have far more knowledge than we have put to use, and there is ample experience to show how it can be applied effectively for the common welfare. What is needed is to make that application fully and comprehensively. That requires money, personnel, and determination.

While administrative procedures and provision for medical care are being extended to give all children the full advantages of existing knowledge, scientific knowledge will be growing and study of how to utilize it administratively will be going on. For the research that adds to knowledge, money, personnel, and determination are needed also.

<sup>38</sup> In the medium-sized cities 36 percent of the illnesses received no medical care among relief families; 38 percent among self-sustaining families of lowest income; and successively less for higher-income groups down to 21 percent. In the large cities, the percentages were 28 among relief families; 32 among families with less than \$1,000; 28 again for those with \$1,000 to \$2,000; and 23 and 18 for the two upper-income groups.

<sup>39</sup> See *The First Five Years of Life*.

The training and support of qualified personnel—for research, for control of disease, for treatment, for educational services—depend largely upon money. The quality and amount of medical care that children get depend largely on money—the incomes of their own families and the financial status of their communities. And the amount of money devoted to such purposes depends largely on public appreciation of their importance.

Gradually it has become clear that a large part of the money needed to assure health to children must come from public funds. Services for environmental sanitation and control of communicable disease have long been supported by taxation and provided for the entire population without discrimination. It has long been a recognized function of government to provide at least a minimum of medical care in hospitals and clinics or at home for “the indigent.” More recently it has been accepted in theory that it is to the interest of the community to supply systematic medical oversight and advice in clinics or “conferences” for mothers and babies and young children and for school children through regular examinations and counsel as part of the school program. Since 1935 Federal grants-in-aid have been available to the States for the extension and improvement of maternal and child-health services.

It is coming to be recognized that a very large part of the population, in addition to “the indigent,” cannot, from their own resources, meet the expense of proper medical care and that in the long run it will pay “the public” to supply hospital accommodations, laboratory facilities and other diagnostic aids, use of therapeutic appliances, medical and nursing service, and convalescent care for all the “medically needy.” On this point the recommendations of his Conference include the following specific statement:

*The health and well-being of children depend to a large extent upon the health of all the members of their families. Preventive and curative health service and medical care should be made available to the entire population, rural and urban, in all parts of the country. A considerable portion of the population is able to obtain from its own resources all or part of the necessary medical service. Another large section of the population, however, consists of families whose incomes are below the level at which they can reasonably be expected to budget all the varying costs of illness without interfering with the provision of other items essential to the family's health and welfare; for these there should be available adequately supervised medical and dental care through a program financed by general tax funds, social-insurance systems, or such combination of methods as may be best suited to local conditions.*

*To achieve these ends will require expansion of full-time local public-health services organized on a city, county, or district basis; construction and adequate support of health centers and hospitals as needed, especially in rural areas, and more effective use of existing medical services and facilities; more effective co-*

*ordination of community public-health and medical services conducted by various agencies, public and private.*

More money will have to be spent by government at all levels—local, State, and Federal. The responsibilities of each—administrative as well as financial—will have to be defined. The confusing array of agencies, public and voluntary, will have to be brought into a comprehensible system.

Specific next steps for improving the health of children, and how they shall be taken, will vary in different communities according to local needs and resources and according to what has already been done. In general, for the immediate future they will most profitably take the direction of extending the coverage of local public-health services; constructing and maintaining health centers and hospitals, especially in rural areas; developing measures for assuring medical and dental and nursing care, either through social insurance or in some other way, for all persons who cannot buy it at market rates; extending provisions for the care of mothers and babies until the essentials are available to all, from the beginning of pregnancy through the first month after the baby's birth; extending preventive and curative medical services for children of all ages until they reach all children and embrace all the elements recognized to be important; expanding educational programs for the enlightenment of all citizens; increasing support for research; and providing more opportunities in professional schools and otherwise for training specialized personnel needed to carry on the various programs effectively. (See Recommendations, pp. 369–371.)

In taking these next steps the part of the Federal Government will be, as in the field of education, to set national standards of care and service, to carry on research, to supply consultation service for the States, and to assist the States financially in bringing their provisions up to standard, doing it on such terms as will raise the level in those parts of the country where it is lowest and the health of the children is poorest. The States will have similar functions in relation to their local subdivisions, but with more responsibility for supervision and for supplying specialized services. On the program maintained by the local community, with these aids, will depend the health of the individual child.

A comprehensive national health program was outlined in 1938, and a 10-year course to realize it was charted by the Technical Committee on Medical Care of the Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities. That program consisted of recommendations under five heads:

- (1) Expansion of general public-health services: In public-health organization and in combating specific diseases; and in maternal and child-health services.
- (2) Expansion of hospital facilities.

- (3) Medical care of the medically needy.
- (4) A general program of medical care.
- (5) Insurance against loss of wages during sickness.

With respect to the first recommendation substantial progress has been made, with the aid of increased Federal appropriations for grants to the States. No action has been taken by Congress with respect to the other recommendations, although a comprehensive bill designed to implement all the recommendations was introduced in 1939 by Senator Wagner of New York.

Subjects requiring special attention in programs for guarding and improving the health of children are nutrition and mental health. Prevention of diarrhea and enteritis, an outstanding cause of infant death early in the present century, before pasteurization of milk was generally required and modern methods of feeding understood, is now a relatively simple problem for health authorities. Several of the communicable diseases of childhood are—or should be—on their way out. The more recent recognition of the importance of nutrition, particularly in the early periods of life, and the newer scientific knowledge of the elements essential to good nutrition and of how to supply them have put that subject in the forefront of interest. Similarly, growing knowledge of the requirements for good mental health, of the manifestations of abnormality and of how to deal with them, and of the importance of recognizing them as early as possible has given that subject a more prominent place than ever before.

Provisional goals for the present cannot be set short of what experts say is within reach under existing conditions by a reasonable amount of effort. If half the maternal deaths are preventable, the only possible goal is to cut the maternal mortality rate in two. If an infant mortality rate of 25 is attainable, a rate of 47, or indeed any rate above 25, is not tolerable. If some cities for several years at a time do not have a single death from diphtheria, there is no excuse for any deaths from that devastating disease anywhere in the country. Wherever death rates or other records—whether in a geographic area or in a minority element of the population—indicate conditions relatively unfavorable to the health of children, the aim must be to narrow the distance between those records and the best, to bring them at least up to the average. If this were done for all age periods, as well as for childhood, babies born in the United States would have in prospect an average lifetime of 70 years—70 years, too, of abounding health.

## Chapter XIII

### Dwellings

#### Development of Interest in the United States

FOR a century or more realization has been growing in the large cities of the United States that certain social problems are often aggravated by characteristics of the houses in which people live. Public concern has manifested itself at different times and in different places in a variety of ways, differing in specific objectives, in extent of application, in scope, and in efficacy.

In 1834, the health inspector of New York City, looking for some cause for the high mortality found that "none appears so prominent as that of intemperance and the crowded and filthy state in which a great portion of our population lives, apparently without being sensible of their situation; and we have serious cause to regret that there are in our city so many mercenary landlords who only contrive in what manner they can stow the greatest number of human beings in the smallest space." His successor in 1842 undertook to give a comprehensive idea of the conditions under which the working population of the city lived. In many instances, he said, these people would be better off if they were "absolutely houseless," at least during part of the year. The evils he found most conspicuous were overcrowding, insufficient ventilation, occupancy of cellars and basements, courts and alleys. He ascribed the bad conditions to the sudden increase of population through immigration, together with lack of regulation and control by municipal authorities. "Moral degradation" was a consequence, as well as disease.

Until recent years it was assumed that dwellings on farms and in villages were all right, since they had plenty of space around them to let in sun and air and were occupied for the most part by their owners, who were not at the mercy of competitive commercial enterprise. But farm owners increasingly have become tenants, who move frequently, or migrant laborers with no abiding place; and standards of what constitutes decent housing have been rising. Recent studies have shown that many farm homes are no better than those in cities. They may have better air around them but not necessarily better ventilation. Frequently they are overcrowded and have fewer conveniences and comforts than urban dwellings.

## Standards

What, in general terms, children and the rest of the family require in a dwelling place is fairly obvious and has been sketched in Chapter V. Concrete definition of the kinds of houses that will meet these requirements is another matter. Standards in this sense can be formulated only by experts in a number of fields. Like standards for health, education, relief, or any other feature of human life, they are not static but are subject to constant revision in the light of accumulating knowledge, technological progress, and a rising standard of living. Concepts of social measures through which the scientific standards can be made to prevail also change under the influence of experience and with fluctuating pressure from public opinion. They rise slowly and, as in other fields, are far behind the standards set by science.

### *Basic Principles of Healthful Housing.*

Formulation of scientific standards of housing in relation to health has made great strides since 1937 through the work of the committee on the hygiene of housing of the American Public Health Association. In 1938 this committee issued a report, *Basic Principles of Healthful Housing*,<sup>1</sup> which included specific requirements “believed to be fundamental minima required for the promotion of physical, mental, and social health, essential in low-cost as well as high-cost housing, on the farm as well as in the city tenement.” For each objective the report suggests the more important means of achieving it, in terms intelligible to the average householder, as well as to housing and health officials, and suggestive to tenants and home owners, as well as to public authorities.

The 30 basic principles are classified under 4 headings: Fundamental physiological needs; fundamental psychological needs; protection against contagion; protection against accidents. They have been summarized as follows: <sup>2</sup>

(1) Maintenance of proper heating and ventilation conditions through suitable design and equipment; provision of adequate light, both natural and artificial; avoidance of locations or construction which would permit excessive noise to pervade the home, disturbing sleep and causing general irritation; provision of adequate space for exercise and children's play.

(2) Provision of privacy for individual members of the family; provision of adequate space for normal gatherings of the family and of the community; development of housing facilities on the basis of a neighborhood or community unit so as to encourage natural and desirable community interests and activities; provision of facilities for efficient housekeeping and for cleanliness, both of the person and of the dwelling; provision for reasonable esthetic satisfaction in the home and its surroundings.

<sup>1</sup> *Basic Principles of Healthful Housing* (2d ed.). American Public Health Association, New York, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> *White House Conference on Children in a Democracy: Preliminary Statements*, p. 71.

(3) Provision of a pure water supply; avoidance of water contamination through faulty plumbing; provision of sanitary toilets and sewage disposal; avoidance of insanitary conditions in the yard or vicinity of the home; use of construction methods which will exclude vermin; provision of adequate refrigeration facilities to protect milk and foods from spoiling.

(4) Protection against accidents by requiring construction substantial enough to prevent collapse of any part of the dwelling; avoidance of accident hazards through proper design of stairs, windows, porches, and so forth; control of conditions which would cause fires or permit their spread; provision of adequate fire escapes; protection against gas poisoning and electrical shocks; protection of children and other pedestrians against automobile accidents while at play or en route to schools, shops, and so forth, through proper planning of streets and playgrounds.

Continuing research is conducted by this committee in the aspects of design, construction, and operation of houses that affect physical and mental health, and the results are interpreted to officials and technicians in public health and housing. Studies are under way of standards for the regulation of room occupancy and overcrowding, for better measurement of crowding and methods of control in congested areas, for formulation of a technique for the appraisal of housing conditions in problem areas. The province of this committee naturally widens with the progress of its researches and discussions. The provision of adequate housing, said its chairman, C.-E. A. Winslow, "like nutrition is one aspect of the problem of poverty and must be approached in a positive sense with the view of upbuilding a fullness and wholesomeness of life."<sup>3</sup>

### *Special Functional Requirements for Farmhouses.*

Although the fundamental biological requirements for a dwelling place are the same wherever it may be, functional requirements for a farmhouse and for a city home are quite different. More work and more kinds of work are done in a farmhouse than in a city house, and more social activities are carried on there. Farm families, having fewer opportunities for amusement outside, spend a larger part of their leisure time at home. The farmhouse needs more space for cooking and eating, for washing and sewing, for taking care of dairy and poultry products, for curing meat and canning fruits and vegetables, for storage. It is also a business center, where the farmer keeps his papers, writes his letters, sees business callers. All these special uses should be taken into consideration in planning the orientation of a farmhouse, the relation of entrances to driveways, the type of heating, the arrangement of rooms, and the allocation of space among them.

Another difference between city and rural homes is that when the farm family wants a change it cannot move to another house unless it builds a

<sup>3</sup> *The Changing Front of Health.* Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Conference of the Milbank Memorial Fund, April 2-3, 1940, p. 19. Milbank Memorial Fund. New York, 1940.

new one or leaves the farm. A farmhouse, therefore, should be planned to permit expansion as the family increases and contraction (by cutting off from use a part of the house) as the children grow up and leave home or when a period of low income imposes economical operation.

As an aid to designers and property owners in planning low-cost farmhouses the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture has summarized general requirements for farmhouses. For this purpose the United States was divided into 14 regions of varying requirements because of climate, use of land, size of farms, and types of farming, and for each region modifications of the basic requirements for farmhouses are suggested.<sup>4</sup> The standards suggested are based on practices, preferences, and opinions of many farm women and extension workers of the Department. Thus they are "realistic." And they are elastic also. Suggestions are made as to a variety of ways in which the essentials may be attained: for example, different ways of using a four-room or a five-room house to best advantage, although "at least six rooms are desirable."

The treatment of general requirements covers construction and orientation, room uses, protection of entrances, location and structure of doors and windows, heating, sanitary facilities, service areas, storage facilities, use of basement, dining areas, business area,<sup>5</sup> provisions for child care, sleeping arrangements, provisions for leisure-time activities indoors,<sup>6</sup> and—although "not so important in the country as in the city"—special provisions for outdoor life, among which are a screened work porch, sleeping porches, a shady place in the yard, a porch or terrace on the ground floor, an upper deck or balcony in a two-story house.

Standards for the care of children recognize the importance of climate as a determining factor. "Small children must play constantly within sight of the mother, in a place that is warm and safe. It is convenient \* \* \* to have toilet facilities and a bed on the first floor near the kitchen. In regions that have long periods of inclement weather a special playroom is highly desirable, particularly for rough and noisy play. There should also be a safe, fenced place in the yard in which small children can play, preferably within sight of the kitchen windows \* \* \*. For older children an ordinary farm with animals, trees, and streams leaves little to be desired in outdoor play resources."

<sup>4</sup> *Housing Requirements of Farm Families in the United States*, by Maud Wilson. U. S. Department of Agriculture Miscellaneous Publication No. 322. Washington, February 1939. A comprehensive earlier discussion of rural housing—conditions, standards, practical suggestions on design and construction, farmstead planning, economic and financial aspects, and consideration of various other phases of the subject—is contained in *Farm and Village Housing* (Reports of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, Vol. 7, Washington, 1932).

<sup>5</sup> Farm homemakers "decidedly" prefer that a room be set aside for business purposes, rather than a corner of one of the rooms used in common.

<sup>6</sup> "A living room that will accommodate 25 persons \* \* \* is rather generally considered adequate."



### *Needs of Dependent Families and Migrants.*

Families on relief, whether in city or country, and migratory families, whether on the Atlantic coast or on the Pacific coast, have the same needs in the way of housing as self-supporting and settled families. Their children also are affected adversely by overcrowding, lack of sun and air, defective plumbing, rickety stairs and porches. Bad housing conditions indeed are an even greater danger for such children than for children in more comfortable circumstances, because of the other unfavorable conditions of their lives.

### *Standards Developed by Federal Agencies.*

Progress in formulating concrete standards has followed the creation of Federal agencies empowered to extend financial aid of one kind or another to encourage the building of inexpensive and moderately expensive housing. The Housing Division of the Public Works Administration, the Federal Housing Administration, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, the Farm Security Administration, and the United States Housing Authority in the exercise of their statutory functions have necessarily defined the conditions under which loans and grants would be made.

Inasmuch as the main purpose of the United States Housing Act of 1937 is to increase the supply of suitable homes for low-income families, the general requirements embodied in the act, together with the regulations issued by the Federal agency for the guidance of local authorities in planning housing projects for which Federal aid is desired, may be accepted as representing present official standards for such homes. These standards are not static. They have been developed through study and experience and will continue to develop as further experience accumulates.

Minimum essentials of design included in the United States Housing Authority's present standards<sup>7</sup> are believed by the Authority to be applicable for projects to be built in all parts of the country. They include requirements as to site, facilities for community activities within the project, construction of buildings, provision of storage space and laundry facilities for tenants, and lay-out and equipment of the dwelling units.

Each dwelling unit in a USHA-aided project must have at least a private toilet and bathing facilities, one bedroom, one living room (which may include kitchen equipment), and permanently installed cooking facilities or space for their installation. A range of sizes acceptable for each kind of a room is supplied, and recommendations are made as to arrangement of rooms. Standards of "normal" and "minimum" occupancy for units of different sizes range from two persons in a unit with one bedroom to seven persons as a minimum and eight as normal in a unit with four bedrooms. It is assumed that normally the living room will

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<sup>7</sup> *Summary of Standards and Requirements for USHA-Aided Projects.* U. S. Housing Authority, Federal Works Agency, Washington, July 1, 1940. (Processed.)

not be used for sleeping. Requirements are specified for ventilation, window area, height of ceilings, closet space, and equipment. Equipment must include wiring for electric light, hot and cold running water ("generally"), bathtub or shower, and flush toilet within the unit, provision for heating, and certain kitchen equipment, including shelves.

### Present Conditions

In connection with the Federal decennial census of 1940, information was collected on 31 items for every dwelling. When tabulated, this will give the first comprehensive view of housing throughout the country. Meanwhile, descriptions must be based on extensive sampling surveys and the knowledge of experts. One-third of the families in the United States, it is estimated, are "ill-housed." That means more than one-third of the children, as there are more children in poor families than in families in comfortable and prosperous circumstances, and the poor can pay least rent and therefore must live in the least desirable houses everywhere, frequently in congested city districts and depressed rural areas. Millions of American children are living in dwellings that according to modern standards are "unfit for use"; and other millions in houses only less badly lighted, poorly ventilated, insanitary, overcrowded, many of them in undesirable neighborhoods.

#### *General Shortage.*

Because of the small amount of residential building during the depression, there is, in 1940, an actual housing shortage in the United States as a whole, which in many places is acute, especially at the lower rent levels. One authority has estimated <sup>8</sup> that some 7 million new dwellings are needed to accommodate the families of the United States in 1940 at minimum acceptable standards and to permit a normal degree of freedom of choice. That would mean an over-all shortage of about 20 percent. According to this estimate, something like 40 percent of the farm families and 15 percent of the nonfarm families need new homes or radical improvements in existing dwellings.

In some rural districts and in some cities supply and demand may be in normal equilibrium. In others the shortage is extreme. And wherever a shortage exists, the poorest families suffer most from it. To meet the needs of the population, houses must be where people want to live or have to live, and the rent must be what they can pay. A vacant apartment on Park Avenue or a vacant estate on Long Island or in California does not diminish a housing shortage in Harlem. Vacancies on Chicago's "Gold Coast" are of no practical interest to families in the stockyards district or to farmers "down State."

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<sup>8</sup> *Introduction to Housing, Facts and Principles*, by Edith Elmer Wood, pp. 69-83. U. S. Housing Authority, Federal Works Agency, Washington, 1940.

Preliminary figures have been issued by the Bureau of the Census on the total number of dwelling units, the number occupied on April 1, 1940, and the number vacant in each State, each county, and each city of 10,000 or more population. The total number of dwellings enumerated in the United States was 37,336,890, of which 6.6 percent were vacant.<sup>9</sup> The average population per occupied unit was 3.8 for the United States, ranging from an average of 4.5 in North Carolina to 3.2 in the 3 Pacific States. "Vacant" dwelling units include not only units for sale or for rent, but also "units held for absent households," such as summer and winter homes that were not occupied on April 1, and "a small number of units temporarily occupied by nonresident households." Even the unanalyzed total shows more about the supply of dwellings in different parts of the country than we have known before.

Vacancy rates, according to these figures, vary widely, ranging among the States from 3.2 percent in West Virginia to 15.9 percent in New Hampshire, and among the cities of 100,000 inhabitants or more, from 1.4 percent in Canton, Ohio, and 1.5 percent in Fall River, Mass., to 12.1 percent in Miami, Fla. The highest ratios for entire States (10 percent or more) were in the States containing large resort areas: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New Jersey, Florida, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona. The lowest (less than 4 percent) were in Iowa, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and 4 southern States—West Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Mississippi.

Dwellings "vacant, for sale or rent" amounted to less than 1 percent of the total in one or more counties in Florida, Illinois, Nebraska, Texas, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Minnesota, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Utah. On the other hand, 25 percent or more of the dwelling units were vacant in certain counties in one-fourth of the States,<sup>10</sup> up to 46 percent in Cape May County, N. J. To interpret these variations more details are needed about the dwelling units and a great deal of study of other conditions. In general, however, it appears that the areas with a high proportion of vacant dwellings on April 1, 1940, were either seasonal resorts or areas of depressed agricultural, industrial, or mining interests.

Among the cities large and small (10,000 inhabitants or more), the shortage in housing accommodations appears to be greatest in manufacturing centers, particularly centers producing steel and other commodities needed in the defense program. Bessemer, Ala., for example, had only 94 unoccupied dwelling units (1.5 percent of the total). The vacancy ratio in Birmingham, Ala., and in Pittsburgh was 2.4 percent; in South Bend and in Akron, 2 percent; in Gary, East Chicago, and Dayton, 1.4 percent, 0.6 percent, and 1.9 percent, respectively.

<sup>9</sup> *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940*: Preliminary figures based on a 5-percent cross section of 1940 census returns.

<sup>10</sup> New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Texas, South Dakota, Colorado, New Mexico, and Oregon.

From these somewhat random examples it is obvious—since a margin of 5 percent is considered not more than enough to allow for normal moving about and since some of the occupied units no doubt were substandard in condition and overcrowded—that many industrial centers are ill prepared to accommodate an influx of workers. A much higher percentage of all dwelling units were “vacant, for sale or rent” in the rural areas than in urban areas. In only 3 of the 48 States was the proportion in rural areas lower than the proportion in urban areas.

### *Housing in Cities.*

Housing conditions in a large and representative sample of the cities of the United States were surveyed in the middle of the last decade.<sup>11</sup> “Real-property inventories” were made as work projects under the Federal work programs between 1934 and 1936 in 203 urban areas scattered through the 48 States, containing 44 percent of the urban population and over 8 million dwelling units. They were made on a uniform basic plan, covering structural condition of the building, sanitary facilities in the dwelling, and number of persons per room. Such factors as light and ventilation, width of streets, play space, land congestion, and fire hazards were not considered, as the collection of exact and comparable information and the tabulation of such data were not possible under the conditions of the surveys. The extent of bad housing revealed by these surveys, therefore, is necessarily an understatement.

As to structural condition of the buildings, 39 percent of all were reported “in good condition,” 16 percent “unfit for use” or “needing major repairs,” and 45 percent in need of minor repairs. About one-fourth of all the buildings were 40 years old or older, and old houses in the United States are likely to be neglected houses.<sup>12</sup>

As to equipment and conditions in the dwelling units, 4 percent had neither electric light nor gas, 15 percent did not have a private indoor flush toilet, 20 percent had no private bathtub or shower; and 17 percent of the occupied units were “crowded or worse,”<sup>13</sup> that is, occupied by more persons than there were rooms—counting not merely bedrooms but all rooms in the house except bathrooms, halls, and storage places. Crowding, structural neglect, and absence of modern improvements are not always or necessarily found together, but for obvious reasons they tend to coincide.

There are wide geographic differences on all these points and sharp differences between city and city in the same region. In general, the best showing on the points covered was made by California (represented by

<sup>11</sup> See *Introduction to Housing* (U. S. Housing Authority, Washington, 1939) and *Urban Housing, 1934-36*, (Works Progress Administration, Washington, 1938.)

<sup>12</sup> *Introduction to Housing*, pp. 9-16.

<sup>13</sup> Three degrees of crowding were recognized: “Crowded,” more persons than rooms; “overcrowded,” more than twice as many persons as rooms; “greatly overcrowded,” more than three times as many persons as rooms.

Alameda County, including Oakland, Piedmont, and San Leandro, and by two other cities in the State, but not the two largest) and the next best by the Northeast, including New York City; the poorest by the Southeast and the Southwest, exclusive of California; with the great Northwest quadrangle beyond the Mississippi standing between.<sup>14</sup> If the surveys had recorded dark rooms and overcrowded building lots the Northeastern cities would very likely have had a lower rating on those points than the other sections. If they had evaluated noise, smoke, smells, dirt, trash, fire hazards and traffic hazards, and other neighborhood conditions, the picture would be far more gloomy.

Dwelling units without electric light or gas were a negligible proportion in New York City and only 1.5 percent in California, but were 25.4 percent in the Southeast. The proportion without a private bathtub or shower varied between 8 percent in California and 41 percent in the Southeast; the proportion without a private indoor flush toilet varied from 7 percent in California to 32 percent in the Southeast. In California 9 percent of the dwellings were "crowded or worse," in New York City 20.2 percent, and in the Southeast 26 percent.

Some of these findings are confirmed and supplemented by those of the National Health Survey of 1935-36, which in its canvass of some 800,000 households in 83 representative cities and 23 rural areas in 19 States included data about crowding and about toilet facilities.<sup>15</sup>

In respect to crowding this study found conditions worst in the South and best in the West; the distinction between the East and the Central area was slightly in favor of the East. It found further that in the South and in the West the greatest amount of crowding was in the smallest cities (under 25,000); in the Central area there was almost as much crowding in the smallest cities as in the largest (500,000 and over). In none of the 4 geographic areas did the amount of crowding vary directly according to size of cities. In each geographic area there was much more crowding among the colored population (which in this study includes all but the white) than among the white population. The difference between the white and colored population in respect to crowding was greatest in the West, where 30 percent of the colored households, but only 9 percent of the white households, had more than 1 person per room; next greatest in the South, 37 percent and 20 percent; third greatest in the Central area, 27 percent and 15 percent; and least in the East, 21 percent and 14 percent.

In respect to toilet facilities, conditions were found to be worst in the South and best in the East; the distinction between the West and the Central area was in favor of the West. The smallest cities (under 25,000)

<sup>14</sup> See Charts in Ch. II which show variations in income.

<sup>15</sup> *Adequacy of Urban Housing in the United States as Measured by Degree of Crowding and Type of Sanitary Facilities*, pp. 1-13. National Health Survey: Sickness and Medical Care Series, Bulletin No. 5. U. S. Public Health Service, Washington, 1938.

in each of the 4 geographic areas made the poorest showing, much worse than the larger cities.

Rentals naturally tend to correspond to size and relative desirability of dwelling units and their surroundings. Statistics are hardly needed to demonstrate that dwellings renting for \$50 or more a month have more improvements and are in better repair than dwellings renting for \$10 or less; or, to put it the other way round, that median rentals are 3 or 4 times as high in structures in good condition as in structures "unfit for use."

Naturally, too, families with small incomes tend to gravitate to houses at low rentals. This, too, is a truism that does not require statistical proof. Nonetheless, statistics from the National Health Survey are impressive in what they show about the amount of difference a little more income makes in the housing conditions of families, as exemplified by the single item of crowding. The extent of crowding, whether judged by the liberal definition, "more than two persons per room," or the more exacting definition, "more than one person per room," varied inversely with economic status. For purposes of comparison economic status was classified in five groups:

- (1) Families that had received relief at any time during the year,
- (2) Self-supporting families with incomes of less than \$1,000,
- (3) Families with incomes between \$1,000 and \$2,000, and
- (4) Families with incomes of \$2,000 and over.

The percentages living in households with more than one person per room were, for the four income groups in the order just named, 34.2, 17.0, 11.8, 7.7; with two or more persons per room, 10.2, 5.0, 1.5, 0.7.

Among the relief families, the proportion with two or more to a room ranged from 3 percent in cities of 25,000 to 100,000 in the East to 28 percent in cities of the same size in the South; the proportion with more than one person per room ranged from 23 percent in cities of 100,000 to 500,000 in the West to almost 50 percent in cities of the same size in the South.

With a given income, unless it is ample to allow a generous margin for the indulgence of tastes beyond the supplying of necessities, the larger the family the less it can afford for rent. In 23 of the cities covered by the real-property inventories median rent paid by households with 1 child was \$21, by households with 5 children or more, \$15.<sup>16</sup> Households with 3 or more children occupied only 10 percent of the dwellings in structures "in good condition" or "in need of minor repairs" but 20 percent of those "unfit for use" or "in need of major repairs" (which also practically were unfit for use). In short, the more children a city family has, the poorer its dwelling is likely to be, and the more crowded. And in a crowded home it is the little children who are the most crowded in sleeping quarters and in space for all their activities. From the standpoint of family welfare that

<sup>16</sup> *Consumer Incomes in the United States*, p. 21. This study shows an average annual income per person of \$542 for families of 3 to 4 persons and \$221 for families of 7 or more persons (see p. 81).

may be the best adjustment feasible in a situation that is bad for all members of the family, but it is not on that account any less bad for the children.

Surrounding conditions are important as well as conditions within the house, and are more important for children than for the grown members of the family. Dilapidated, unimproved, overcrowded homes are likely to have undesirable surroundings: Factories and other tall buildings, uncollected garbage and trash, little space for play, dangers from fire and traffic, noise, smoke, and disagreeable odors; or else unpaved, unsewered streets, not served at all or only sketchily served by the city's housekeeping departments, and bleak, desolate surroundings of vacant lots or abandoned buildings.

Many studies have been made of the effect of slum<sup>17</sup> conditions on the health, habits, and morals of children. Although it is not possible to isolate the influence of any one factor, or even of all the physical factors combined, as contrasted with the human factor of the residents, it has been sufficiently established that slums are costly in terms of the health, nurture, and general well-being of the children who live in them.

Analysis of records of the National Health Survey for white households<sup>18</sup> showed a greater frequency of disabling illness in crowded dwellings, a markedly higher incidence of pneumonia and tuberculosis with greater crowding, an earlier age incidence of the common communicable diseases of childhood in crowded households, an appreciable relation between the incidence of digestive diseases and the lack of toilet facilities, and an increase in the frequency of home accidents with decrease in rental or value of dwelling.

Of all city children, the children of families living in a furnished room are undoubtedly the worst housed, partly because of the psychological and emotional effects of living with their parents within the confines of one room, with no possibility of privacy.

### *Rural Housing.*

The characteristic defects of housing in cities have long been familiar. It has been a shock to discover in recent years that there are rural slums as well as city slums, and that in some respects country homes are likely to be less desirable places to live in than city tenements. Half the Nation's children live in the country—on farms or in villages or scattered homes.

Realistic descriptions repeated over many years have established a stereotyped vision of a home in a city tenement: Dark rooms opening on narrow air shafts; noisome toilets shared by two, three, or more families,

<sup>17</sup> A "slum" is defined by the United States Housing Act of 1937 as "any area where dwellings predominate which, by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light, or sanitation facilities, or any combination of these factors, are detrimental to safety, health, or morals."

<sup>18</sup> Certain Characteristics of Urban Housing and Their Relation to Illness and Accidents: summary of findings of the national health survey, by Rollo H. Britten, J. E. Brown, and Isadore Altman. *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2 (April 1940), pp. 91-113.

and frequently out of order; fire escapes cluttered with boxes and baby carriages; dingy washings on pulley lines; badly lighted, dirty stairs and halls; swarms of shouting children on the sidewalks; clanging police cars and ambulances in the streets.

A home in the country, on the other hand, because of idealized pictures in literature and nostalgic memories, suggests a children's paradise of trees, grass, and flowers, barns and animals, cheerful kitchens, roaring fireplaces. But the men and women who work for the Farm Security Administration "go every day into homes that have the earth for floors and burlap sacks for window panes. They see thin walls papered with old newspapers and magazines. They see kerosene lamps, back-porch washbasins, and screenless windows and doors. They know that whole families sometimes have to sleep in one room, and that countless farmhouse roofs leak like sieves in the rain."<sup>19</sup>

A survey<sup>20</sup> of nearly 600,000 farm homes in 46 States (about 9 percent of all the occupied farmhouses reported for the surveyed States) was made in 1934 under the direction of the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture. This survey gave the first general view of rural homes in the United States. About half were owned by their occupants. Most of them (93 percent) were frame buildings; 36 percent were unpainted frame buildings—only 8 percent in New England but over 50 percent in the South. The "index of condition"<sup>21</sup> of houses, which took into account foundations, exterior walls, roofs, chimneys, doors and windows, interior walls and ceilings, and floors, gave an average rating of 44 for the United States, with a range by regions from 70 in New England down to 33 in the West South Central division, and by counties in this least favorable region, from 55 down to 17.

The average number of rooms per rural dwelling for the United States was 5.4, and in 10 percent of the houses there were rooms that were not in use for one reason or another. Regular occupants averaged 4.6 per house, 0.86 per room. That does not suggest much overcrowding. But the average for the Mountain division and the South Atlantic division was 1 person per room (which according to standards accepted for cities indicates "crowding"), for the West South Central 1.10 persons, and for the East South Central 1.11. Averages for single counties ran up to 1.40, 1.50, and 1.67 in Missouri, Alabama, and Kentucky.

Such averages mean that some farm families must have been seriously cramped in their house room. In one of the mountain counties of Virginia

<sup>19</sup> Rural Housing—Today and Tomorrow, by Will W. Alexander. *Housing Yearbook, 1940*, p. 189. National Association of Housing Officials Chicago, 1940.

<sup>20</sup> *The Farm-Housing Survey*. U. S. Department of Agriculture Miscellaneous Publication No. 323. Washington, March 1939.

<sup>21</sup> The "index of condition" is an average of the number of cases reporting good condition for any one of 7 structural items, expressed as a percentage of the total number of cases in each geographic unit. Theoretically the index might be anywhere from 100 (for a geographic unit in which every house is in good condition as to each of the 7 structural items) down to 0 (for one in which no house is in good condition in any respect).



in 1939 a family of 12 was found living in a single room 12 by 14 feet in dimensions.<sup>22</sup> The room had a table in the middle, a rusty stove in one corner, and pallets around the walls on which all 12 slept. In 16 rural counties in Georgia, covered by the National Health Survey of 1935–36, 12 percent of the white and 27 percent of the colored households had 2 or more persons per room; 90 percent of all had privies (some of them shared by 2 or more families) and 4 percent had no toilet facilities of any kind. “In many rural counties,” the United States Housing Authority declares in its report for 1939,<sup>23</sup> “there is not a single unoccupied habitable dwelling. Large families are often forced to live cramped up in 2- or 3-room shacks, or several families have to ‘double up’ in single dwellings that are frequently substandard to begin with.”

Of the total 600,000 farmhouses covered by the survey, 30 percent had a water supply in the house; 28 percent, a kitchen sink with drain; 25 percent, ice or mechanical refrigeration (only 2 percent mechanical); 21 percent, a power washing machine; 21 percent, gas or electricity for lighting; 11 percent, a bathtub; 9 percent, some kind of central-heating system; and 9 percent, an indoor flush toilet.

Central heating was naturally more common in the North—in 3 houses out of 10 in New England—and rare in the South—in only 1 house out of 300 or 350 in the West South Central division. New England was best supplied with refrigeration also (65 percent), as well as with central heating; next in order came the Pacific States (33 percent); and at the bottom (20 percent), the hot East South Central division (Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi).

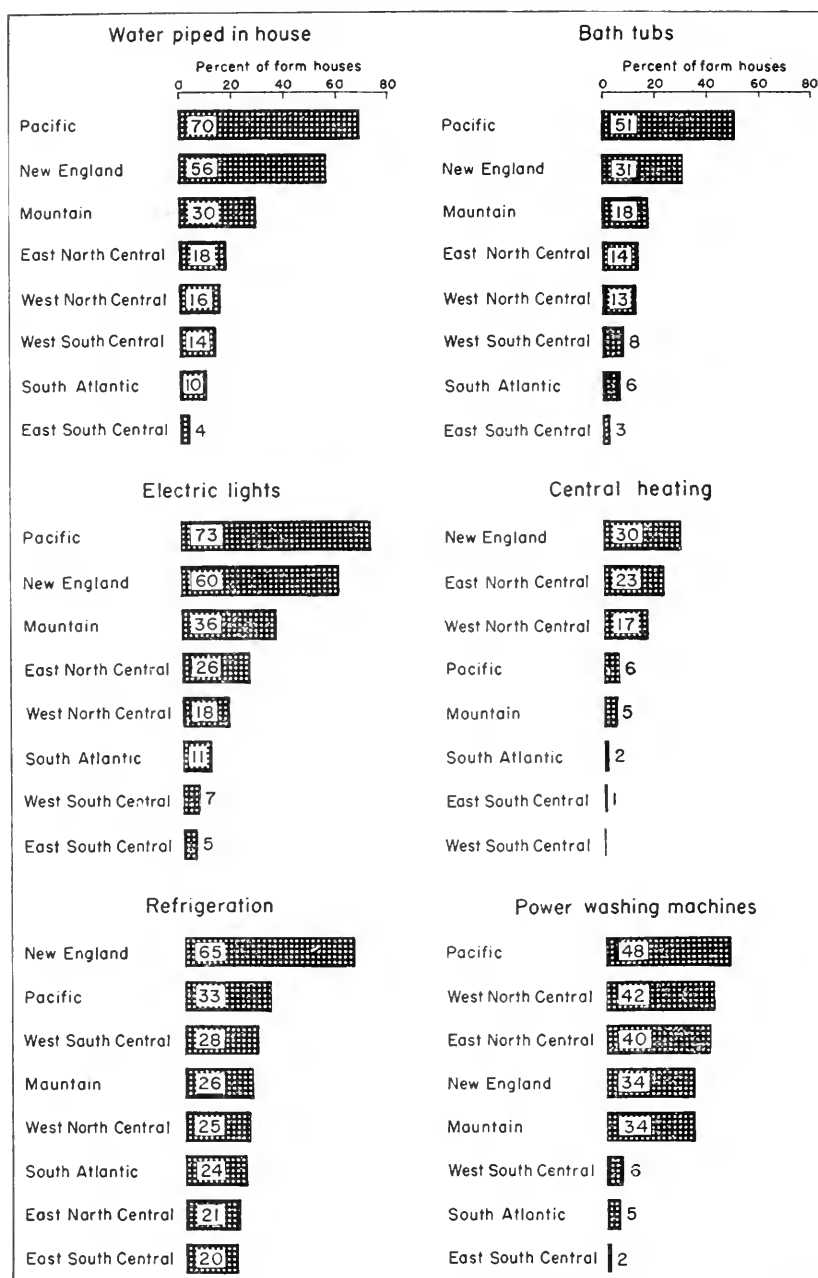
Distribution of conveniences corresponded roughly with average farm income. Power washing machines were most common in the Pacific States, where almost half of the farmhouses had them, and were found in more than a third of the farmhouses in the two North Central, the New England, and the Mountain divisions. In other items also that are an index to comfort (gas or electric lighting, bathtubs, and indoor flush toilets) the Pacific States rank at the top and are followed by New England, whereas the Southern States are at the bottom, a long way below. (See chart 41.)

Farmers naturally give first place in their calculations to the land that is the source of their livelihood rather than to the houses they live in. When money is limited they are more likely to use it for outlays that will increase the yield of the land than for repairs and improvements to the dwelling. Great red barns, labor-saving machinery, comforts for the cattle, and electricity for the chicken houses, proverbially contrast with the little unpainted farmhouse lacking all conveniences for the farmer’s wife, even water in the kitchen. The first essential to good housing for the farm owner is that the land should support a good house.

<sup>22</sup> Rural Housing—Today and Tomorrow, pp. 180–194.

<sup>23</sup> *Annual Report of the U. S. Housing Authority for the Fiscal Year 1939*, p. 26. Washington, 1940.

Chart 41.—Percentage of farm houses with certain conveniences in specified geographic divisions; United States, 1934<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from *The Farm-Housing Survey* (Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture).

Tenant farmers and sharecroppers have to live in the houses provided for them, which inevitably are of a lower grade than those occupied by farm owners. More than half of the farmers in the South are tenants who live in houses worth on the average \$350.<sup>24</sup> Short-term leases are common. A third or more of the tenants move each year. Low income and frequent changes are not conducive to the making of repairs or improvements by either owner or tenant. In a Southeastern farming section, 59 percent of the Negro sharecroppers were living in "crowded" conditions as contrasted with 8 percent of the operators in a wheat-growing area of the Great Plains. A recent "portraiture of the white tenant farm woman"<sup>25</sup> in the Southeast (where half of all the tenant farmers of the States live) shows a drab, hard life, 6.4 children born per married mother, sturdy determination to make the best of unfavorable conditions. "There's one thing I *have* done," was a typical comment, "I *have* raised my children."

But of all the agricultural population of the country, the 350,000 migratory families, following the seasons or leaving an established home in the hope of finding a new one of better augury, undoubtedly live under the poorest housing conditions.<sup>26</sup> Their shelter is often of the most primitive kind, with no sanitation, no safeguards for children, and sometimes only polluted water to drink. "Old tents, bags, cardboard boxes, sheets of tin and bits of lumber \* \* \* form the typical migrant dwelling. A vacant lot or a ditch bank is their usual housing site." If the search for a new location ends soon and happily, if the seasonal laborers have permanent homes to which they return after a brief absence, the bad conditions en route or while working on the temporary job may not be disastrous. But that is not the usual case.

While on the road or working for employers who do not furnish living quarters, they live by the roadside or in their cars or in tents in squatter "jungles" or crowded into one or two rooms in low-priced tourist camps. Shelter provided by employers varies widely, but usually is no better and sometimes even worse. Short seasons, dependence of the employer on a single crop, indifference of the community to the welfare of people who will be there only temporarily and the desire that they move on as soon as their labor is no longer needed, difficulty of enforcing regulations even if they exist are ample explanations, if not excuses. Families need decent housing, however, whether they change homes every few weeks or live in the same one for years.

<sup>24</sup> Rural Housing—Today and Tomorrow, p. 190.

<sup>25</sup> *Mothers of the South*, by Margaret Jarman Hagood, p. 109. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1939.

<sup>26</sup> For description of conditions under which these families live see Rural Housing—Today and Tomorrow (cited previously); *Migration and Social Welfare*, by Philip E. Ryan (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1940); *Factories in the Field*, by Carey McWilliams (Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1939); *The Grapes of Wrath*, by John Steinbeck (Viking Press, New York, 1939); and studies by the Work Projects Administration.

## Remedies

The state of affairs described in the preceding pages cannot be tolerated in a future America. It did not spring up overnight, nor can it be remedied overnight. Rapid growth of population, sudden large accretions from abroad, the steady migration (until the depression) from country to city, mass movements from east to west and from south to north, impatient exploitation of mineral resources as soon as discovered, development of large new industries, transfer of manufacturing plants from New England to the South, decentralization of certain industries after the World War, exhaustion of the soil, speculative building—in fact, all the familiar characteristics of our national laissez-faire economy—have contributed to produce our present deplorable housing conditions.

When crops must be planted, when gold or coal is to be had for the digging, when a market is waiting for goods, little thought ordinarily is given to standards of shelter for those who are doing the work, and less thought is given to the planning of streets and cities for future development. But one of the stubborn facts about houses and the lay-out of cities is that they last. Once the outline of a ground plan of streets has been indicated by the placing, however accidental, of a few houses, it requires effort to get it modified, however inconvenient that plan may be. Once houses are built they will be lived in as long as they stand unless their use is effectively forbidden. Because of the investment and the cost of replacement, it is hard to get them torn down; and if there is a demand for shelter, no matter how undesirable, it is hard to prevent their being occupied. Demolition laws do, however, if properly framed and enforced, make it possible for municipalities to compel either the razing or the renovation of such structures.

Obviously the methods that have produced our present supply of housing cannot be expected to correct the conditions they have developed. Reliance on private enterprise, subject only to such building laws and zoning regulations as have been imposed, has resulted in "one-third of the Nation" being "ill-housed." That third is the poorest third. It cannot afford to pay for decent housing at the prices at which private enterprise can afford to supply it under present costs of land, capital, construction, and taxes. Private enterprise cannot even build for the moderate-income section of the population, unless costs are reduced.<sup>27</sup>

One remedy would be to increase individual incomes until every family in the Nation would be able to rent or to buy the kind of house it needs and wants. That would be the ideal solution, but it will be dismissed as visionary or utopian. There is no prospect that the disparity between pur-

<sup>27</sup> Housing and City Planning, by Sydney Maslen. *Social Work Year Book 1940*, pp. 245-246. This article and its predecessor in the 1939 Year Book, various articles in the *Housing Yearbook, 1940*, together with *Introduction to Housing*, supply much of the information about measures and agencies presented in the following pages.

chasing power and the selling price of good housing can be wiped out in time to affect a large proportion of the children of 1940, but every increment to low incomes and every reduction in costs will diminish by a fraction that ill-housed "third of the Nation."

Since there is no magic formula for bringing into existence the houses needed to make up the existing shortage and to replace those that fall below a minimum standard, a program for the future must be pieced together from many elements. Common sense dictates that existing houses should be kept in good condition, and that houses that are substandard should be rehabilitated and improved as far as is feasible. It also dictates continued serious study of all the factors that enter into the cost of supplying good shelter, to the end that a larger part of the population can be acceptably provided for by private enterprise, instead of only the upper economic third of the population, and to the end that funds invested in low-rent housing may go farther.

Municipal regulatory measures for the protection of all residents within their jurisdiction, which were the earliest form of governmental activity in the field of housing, have failed to assure minimum standards of safety, health, and comfort. They are still, nevertheless, a necessary factor, perhaps the most important. To be effective, building codes and housing laws need to be revised from time to time to facilitate the use of new materials, new methods of construction, and new standards, and they must be enforced. Many of these codes are antiquated or defective. Enforcement in many places is timid or incompetent or hampered by meager appropriations. Many smaller cities have no building laws.

Zoning ordinances, a later form of regulation, are now recognized as essential to supplement building laws and have led to the larger conception of planning for the future development of a city or a region and of directing its growth from the point of view of all relevant factors. In 1940 there were planning or zoning instrumentalities in 1,800 local communities, 400 counties, and 27 districts otherwise defined. Forty-three States and the District of Columbia have planning organizations; there are several regional commissions (the TVA, for example, and commissions for New England and the Pacific Northwest); and the National Resources Planning Board serves to some degree as a planning agency for the Nation.

Any serious attempt to realize for all children the kind of dwelling that has been declared by the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy to be "unquestionably the best type" for them to grow up in—a single-family house with its own yard—would involve an exercise of governmental powers that now seems fantastic and would revolutionize life in large cities. Children would be debarred entirely from living in many sections of large cities. It would stimulate decentralization of manufacturing and the development of suburban communities and would necessitate the revision of all city plans. No city would consider it. Individual families may well keep

the dictum of the Conference in mind in deciding where to live, but as a practical goal for all children in an urban civilization it will have to be dismissed.

Better housing for "the middle third" of the self-supporting urban population (divided according to income) can be supplied by private enterprise "only on the basis of low returns on a long-time investment."<sup>28</sup> Limited-dividend projects and cooperative ventures have been proved to be feasible in the United States by a long succession of demonstrations since the pioneer efforts about 1850 of the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. They have given superior accommodations to their tenants and have made valuable contributions to housing standards, but not more than 25,000 family units have been produced by limited-dividend companies. Their possibilities are limited by the number of persons and the amount of capital they can attract.

Governmental aid, in the way of tax exemption or loans, has been effective in stimulating construction of good houses by limited-dividend companies and cooperative associations. There were a few such projects in the early years following the World War, and under the New York State Housing Act of 1926 a State Board of Housing was created to supervise and encourage the construction of houses by companies that would limit their profits to 6 percent and their average rental to \$12.50 per room per month in Manhattan and to \$11 elsewhere. Under this act, supplemented by municipal tax exemption, and in three cases by Federal aid also, about 6,000 families have been accommodated in 14 projects in New York City. Federal aid by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in the form of first-mortgage loans was authorized in 1932, but only one project (Knickerbocker Village in New York City) received such a loan before applications for them were transferred by R. F. C. to the Housing Division of the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works (P. W. A.), created under the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933. Seven projects in six communities, including 2 of the 14 projects in New York City under the State Housing Act, received help from P. W. A. and provided for about 700 families aside from those in the New York City projects.

Federal service to home owners began as early as 1906 when the Department of Agriculture published plans for farmhouses and suggestions on modernization. Financial assistance in an indirect form began in 1932, when the Federal Home Loan Bank Board was established to supply a reservoir of credit for home-financing institutions. At that stage of the depression, however, hundreds of foreclosures were taking place each day, real-estate values were in collapse, and the home-mortgage market virtually had disappeared. To meet this critical situation, the Congress in 1933 created the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, which, prior to the close

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<sup>28</sup> *Introduction to Housing*, pp. 113-119.

of its lending period in June 1936, refinanced the homes of more than a million distressed home owners, helped to halt the avalanche of foreclosures, and gave some stability to real-estate values.<sup>29</sup>

When this great burden of distress mortgages had been lifted from the mortgage institutions by H. O. L. C., the Federal Home Loan Bank System began to function. Before the end of 1940 it embraced more than 3,900 thrift and home-financing agencies, with assets of over \$4,930,000,000. Federal savings and loan associations, locally owned and locally managed, chartered by the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, offer long-term loans for the construction and purchase of homes and serve 94 percent of all the counties of the United States.<sup>30</sup> Small down payments and monthly amortized mortgages at low interest rates make possible a broader and more secure home ownership.

The Federal Housing Administration, established in 1934, was another agency designed to stimulate private building and home ownership by insuring loans for repairs on old houses, made by private financial institutions, and by insuring mortgages on homes and on large-scale projects made by private limited-dividend corporations. By the end of 1939, F. H. A. had insured 2,346,276 modernization loans, mortgages on 465,730 small homes, and 269 mortgages on large-scale investment projects containing 30,000 dwelling units.<sup>31</sup> It had thus helped to provide new homes for about 2 million persons, of whom, however, not many are below the "middle-income" group. F. H. A. is now the Federal Government's major agency for encouraging the construction of individual homes and the use of private capital in large-scale construction, subject in every case to F. H. A. approval of plans, methods of construction, and financial arrangements.

Even with such substantial encouragement and indirect financial assistance from government, it has become clear, private enterprise at best will not provide good housing for the millions of families in the lowest economic third of the population, who are living under conditions that should not be tolerated. A few of these families may "filter up" into vacated middle-income houses as accommodations for the middle third improve, but the influence of this process on the problem has been found to be negligible. For low-income families as a group, until their earning power and opportunities are vastly increased, the only hope lies in construction with public funds.

This conclusion was reached by the Housing Division of P. W. A. before it was many months old. Late in 1933 it undertook, as a demonstration, to acquire land in slums or on the outskirts of cities and to build with

<sup>29</sup> *Seventh Annual Report of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board for the Period July 1, 1938, Through June 30, 1939*, p. 125. Washington, 1939.

<sup>30</sup> *Eighth Annual Report of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board for the Period July 1, 1939, Through June 30, 1940*, pp. 4, 52, 90. Washington, 1940.

<sup>31</sup> *Social Work Year Book*, pp. 245-246.

Federal funds new low-cost houses for families who, although not in the lowest-income group, were living in substandard dwellings. These houses were to be rented at rates comparable to slum rentals, although not as low as the lowest. Under this plan, P. W. A. by the fall of 1937 (when the United States Housing Act was passed) had under way or had completed 51 projects in 36 communities, containing 21,500 dwelling units.

Another Federal agency, created by act of Congress in 1934 and restricted in its operation to the District of Columbia, the Alley Dwelling Authority of Washington, D. C., has succeeded not only in clearing out some of the hidden slums in the national capital but also in providing homes for some families of the lowest-income group at "economic" rentals which cover all costs, including overhead, and are within their reach.

After the experimental undertakings of P. W. A., the Congress in 1937, by the United States Housing Act, established a decentralized program of subsidized public housing as a permanent national policy. Four objects were in view: Elimination of slums; rehousing of low-income groups living under substandard conditions; stimulation of the depressed building trades; reemployment of men and capital. To administer the program the United States Housing Authority was established in the Department of the Interior.<sup>32</sup>

The United States Housing Authority "does no slum clearance or building itself, but lends to local public-housing authorities as much as 90 percent of the capital needed for an approved project." Loans are repayable in full within 60 years. It may also make annual contributions, under specified conditions of cooperation by the local governments, to permit rentals sufficiently low. It has set limits on the cost of construction, and requires that tenants be selected from families who otherwise would be obliged to live in substandard housing and whose incomes are not more than 5 times the rent and cost of utilities (6 times if there are 3 or more dependent children). The first congressional authorization was for loans to a total of \$500,000,000 (later increased to \$800,000,000) and annual grants not exceeding \$20,000,000 (later increased to \$28,000,000).

When the act was passed only 46 local housing authorities were in existence in the United States, and only one of them represented a rural community. By the end of 1940 the number had increased to more than 500, including a number of county authorities. All but 10 States—predominantly agricultural—had State enabling legislation. The United States Housing Authority loan funds were exhausted or committed by the end of 1939.

By December 1940, 224 local authorities in 34 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii, had contracted for loans amounting to almost 700 million dollars to build 511 projects containing more than 160,000 dwelling units. During 1940 the first rural projects were approved—

<sup>32</sup> Transferred to the Federal Works Agency in the reorganization plan of July 1, 1939.



in Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina—for 1,573 individual frame dwellings for low-income families. An additional 21,441 dwelling units had already been provided in P. W. A. projects, which were transferred to the U. S. H. A.

These homes have been designed and located with reference to the needs of children. They have light and ventilation and adequate room, and are within easy reach of schools and recreation areas. Safety for children is a primary requirement. Play space for small children is provided within sight of the windows. Many projects are planned to accommodate health centers and nursery schools.

Notwithstanding the obvious gains for individuals and communities that have already accrued from the new national public-housing program, public opinion is not yet uniformly in favor of it.<sup>33</sup> Many local housing authorities did not represent a local demand. Many projects were planned hastily, without the necessary preliminary city planning; and many loan contracts were signed prematurely, to beat an impending deadline.

A program for rural housing to benefit small-farm owners, tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and farm laborers is envisioned by the United States Housing Authority and has been started on a small scale. The greater part of what has been done for rural families thus far has been done by the Farm Security Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture (established in 1937) and its predecessor the Resettlement Administration, in which were merged in 1935 the rural-rehabilitation work of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and the subsistence-homesteads program administered by the United States Department of the Interior.

Experience has enabled the Farm Security Administration to produce good rural houses at low cost. It has developed "tried and proved" housing plans adapted to conditions in each of the regions of the United States.<sup>34</sup> Through its work, and that of the agencies it succeeded, almost 30,000 dwellings on homestead developments, in rural-industrial "greenbelt" communities near cities, on tenant-purchase farms and in migratory-labor camps had been built or repaired for low-income families by the end of 1940.<sup>35</sup> In making loans to tenants for purchase of farms the Farm Security Administration requires that the dwelling be "adequate" to provide decent shelter, which means in general "sufficient in size to house the family comfortably and sound enough in structure to protect them from the elements."

For migratory farm laborers, the part of the Nation that lives under the most deplorable conditions of all, the Farm Security Administration has made some notable experiments. As a temporary measure it began to build camps providing a minimum of decent conditions, in which migrant

<sup>33</sup> NAHO Reviews the Year. *Housing Yearbook*, 1940, pp. 209-223.

<sup>34</sup> See Rural Housing—Today and Tomorrow (*Housing Yearbook* 1940) and Housing and City Planning (*Social Work Year Book*, 1940).

<sup>35</sup> Figure furnished by Farm Security Administration.

families could live as they followed the crops. By 1940, 25 of these camps were in operation or under construction (12 in California, 3 in Arizona, 4 in Texas, 2 in Idaho, 2 in Florida, 1 in Oregon, and 1 in Washington), with total accommodations for about 5,800 families at a time. Each camp has sanitary toilets, showers, and laundry tubs. Most of them have a children's clinic and a nursery, an isolation ward, a small shop where campers can repair their automobiles, and a modest community center for church services and other meetings. A few have temporary school buildings. Recently a few ingenious mobile camps have been added in the Western States. A third venture has been to build small cottages, each with its own garden plot, near some of the permanent camps, to encourage some of the migrants to settle in permanent homes where they can raise most of their food and supplement it by earnings from seasonal labor nearby.

Families dependent on public or private aid for the necessities of life have the same need as self-supporting families for houses that come up to a reasonable standard. How they can be assured is a complex problem. In many cities, because of the shortage of decent accommodations, the best-intentioned agencies with the most exceptionally liberal appropriations cannot provide the families under their care with shelter that corresponds to the specifications they uphold. It has come to be "clearly recognized among welfare and housing officials that in some instances rents paid from relief funds constitute the greatest single subsidy to the maintenance of substandard housing conditions."<sup>36</sup>

Rent-paying policies of public agencies vary widely, not only from place to place but also from time to time in the same place. Frequently they depend primarily on the financial condition of the agency, and they range from the payment of no rent at all up to the maximum allowed or to 100 percent of the amount called for by a standard budget worked out according to composition of family and prevailing rentals. That public-assistance budgets should provide shelter adequate for family needs can hardly be disputed in principle, and ought to be realized in practice.

## The Outlook

It has been estimated<sup>37</sup> that for nonfarm families 13 million dwelling units need to be built by 1950 to wipe out the shortage existing in 1938, to replace the houses "ripe for junking," to allow an annual obsolescence rate of 1.5 percent, and to provide for anticipated increase in population. That would be an average of 1 million units per year, of which a little more than half would be additions needed for increasing population and a little

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<sup>36</sup> See *Housing and Welfare Officials Confer*; a summary of discussion at the joint conference of housing and welfare officials, May 1939 (Public Administration Service Publication No. 67 Chicago, 1939) and *Adjusted Rents* (Committee on Housing, Community Service Society, New York, December 1940).

<sup>37</sup> *Introduction to Housing*, pp. 70, 78, 83.

less than half would be replacement requirements. No comparable estimates have been made for farm families, but even to replace by 1950 the 3 million farmhouses adjudged substandard in 1939, without allowance for future obsolescence or a possible increase in farm population, would add an average of 300,000 to the annual requirement for new construction.

Replacements are needed roughly in inverse ratio to family income. They are needed in largest number and most urgently by families of low income, but also to a considerable extent by families of moderate income. Housing for families in the upper economic third of the population may be provided through private enterprise, subject to general regulation for the protection of all. Experience has shown that some form of public responsibility and leadership is necessary if the children in the lower economic half or two-thirds of all families are to be assured of minimum standards in their dwelling places. Experience has also demonstrated the forms of governmental aid and intervention that are effective. The practicability of slum clearance and subsidized building has been demonstrated.

Just what percentage of the urgent need has been met by the efforts of recent years cannot be calculated. Obviously it is small. At the present rate an overwhelming proportion of the children now living in substandard houses will continue to do so throughout their childhood and, indeed, throughout their lives, unless they succeed in climbing up into a higher-income group.

To hasten the rate of improvement all the tried and approved methods should be applied on a larger scale.<sup>40</sup> Regulatory laws should be modernized and enforced. Stimulation and encouragement to private building and to home ownership (by families in a position to do so) through the safeguarding of credit and other services by governmental agencies should be continued. The Federal program of slum clearance and building for low-income groups should be continued and expanded, and should be extended in larger measure than heretofore to the rural areas, where half the Nation's children live. State and municipal governments, which in general thus far have done much less than the Federal Government, should provide loans and grants for public housing and should cooperate more fully with a Federal program. Research and the promotion of public interest should be prosecuted more vigorously by public and private agencies.

The period of experimentation has lasted long enough. The time has come to adopt a national housing program, on a large scale, with a schedule of accomplishment for the next 25 or 30 years, to the end that all the Nation's children may be assured dwellings suited to their needs for health, safety, and a wholesome family life.

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<sup>40</sup> The specific recommendations made by the White House Conference in January 1940 will be found in Part IV.

## Chapter XIV

### Government and Administration

MANY of the needs of children are met by public services. This implies administration by public officials and support by tax funds. Preservation of health, provision of the fundamentals of education, and protection from neglect and exploitation—these are public services for children that have long been accepted as primary obligations. To an increasing extent other interests of the child also are coming within the scope of governmental responsibility. Public agencies are serving the welfare of children, even if indirectly, by seeking to assure economic security or to provide economic assistance to families, by helping unemployed workers to get jobs, by offering medical care to mother and infant, by removing slums and other housing hazards, by promoting suitable dwellings through housing projects, and by improving and preserving the benefits of rural life.

Direct services for disadvantaged children are also coming more and more within the scope of governmental activities. Economic assistance to parents, whether through social insurance or through general relief, is in some ways as direct a form of assistance to the child as is aid to dependent children. Increasingly the public is assuming responsibility for social services for children whose welfare is jeopardized by conditions contributing to neglect or delinquency. The type of public-welfare organization and program proposed for counties or municipalities elsewhere in this report, and the functions which are entrusted to State and Federal agencies, are all part of the extension of public services in this field. Problems of public administration are therefore intimately associated with problems of service to the child; the appropriate organization of government and the efficiency of its operation take on increasing importance. They necessarily relate in this country to three levels of government—Federal, State, and local. The history and relations of these levels of government are a fascinating part of our national history and of the growth of our democratic form of government, but reference here must be restricted to factors that pertain directly to the administration of services to the child, either directly or through his family.

Generally speaking, community services such as schools, highways, and poor relief have been assumed to be functions of local governments. The historic conflict between State and Federal governments still leaves distinct traces in public opinion, but questions relating to administrative

authority tend to be focused rather on the contrast between local and central government—either State or National—than on division between State and Federal governments.

There are a great many separate local units of public administration in the United States. A study by the Public Administration Service in 1931–32 showed that there were more than 3,000 counties, 16,366 incorporated places, 20,262 towns and townships, 172,108 school districts; and a variety of other governmental units numbering 8,580 raises the total local governmental units in the country to more than 175,000.<sup>1</sup> Ordinarily one might not think of school districts as local governmental units, but their control of the public-school system and the fact that, generally speaking, they are empowered to levy taxes independently of other tax systems render them to all intents and purposes separate units of governments.

In dealing with school problems the total represents approximately the number of distinct administrative units through which the American public must attempt to provide educational opportunities for all children. Something like 40,000 governmental units, not counting the school districts, control or determine the administration of measures relating to public health, medical care, relief, and recreation. Perhaps half this number of authorities have the exclusive legal responsibility to establish standards relating to the condition of dwellings and to enforce these standards. This political structure, which leaves administration of governmental activities to thousands of communities and, for this reason, would theoretically make democratic control easier, has in fact tended to render local public administration more amenable to political-party control and more subject to those abuses of public trust that have given politics their evil reputation. Administrative services that are subject exclusively to local control have tended to be far more subject to political exploitation than those assigned to State or Federal government. This has been less true of school administration because of the vigilance inherent in parental interest. It has been less true of public-health administration because until recently this has been a generally neglected function of local governments and because State responsibility for public-health work has influenced local policy. It has been relatively more true in the administration of public-work and relief programs.

The chief difficulties in local government, of which the American public has become somewhat more aware in recent years, lie in the fact that pub-

<sup>1</sup> *The Units of Government in the United States*, by William Anderson, p. 1. Public Administration Service Publication No. 42, Chicago, 1934. An inquiry made in 1936 showed no change in the number of counties, a small increase in the number of incorporated places, a small decrease in the number of towns and townships, and a decrease of about 2,500 in the number of school districts. There are still about 173,000 local governmental units in the country, and school districts still account for about three-fourths of the number. (*Fundamentals of American Government*, by William Anderson, pp. 10–11; Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1940.)

See also *Facing the Tax Problem*, prepared under the auspices of the Committee on Taxation of the Twentieth Century Fund, Inc. (New York, 1937).

lic functions are increasing in number, in variety, and in cost, while the financial capacities of local governments are limited by tax systems and policies, by the restricted sources of taxation to which local governments have access, and often by limited resources in community wealth. This situation has proved to be the greatest obstacle to the adequate exercise of public-service activities by local government; it has been aggravated by certain political habits and traditions. Local governments have tended during most of the history of the United States to subdivide and multiply. Often this has been attributed to the desire of "politicians" to create additional salaried public posts; and often also to the desire of wealthier taxpayers to shift their burdens by incorporating smaller residential places carved out of larger units.

Recent years have seen the promotion by civic bodies and public-spirited persons of efforts to consolidate and combine local units for the purpose of combining resources and broadening the tax base for the increasing public services. This movement is gradually being accepted by American thought and practice. Consolidation thus far has been most extensive with respect to school districts and has been most resisted by counties. In this direction, among others, administrative and fiscal improvement of local services must be sought in many places.

Although the greatest number of separate public services continues to be within the field of local government, public services are multiplying in the Federal and State governments, and the most important changes and the widest expansion are taking place on these levels.

The public realizes that some change and a degree of redistribution of functions among the three levels of government are imperative and that a certain amount of redistribution has been going on since Washington's administration and the rulings of Chief Justice Marshall in the Supreme Court of the United States. But the tempo of these changes is being accelerated, the pressure is greater, the conviction more definite, and, perhaps also, resistance has increased. Few of these changes have taken the form of removing rights or functions from local to State or from State to Federal government. The method has been rather to regulate or standardize local government, or to help finance local functions and thereby indirectly extend central responsibility, initiative, and coordination. State aid to localities for schools has become so general as to be no longer an issue. In health and welfare activities both financial aid and direct State services have become common. State programs of conservation of natural resources have placed at the disposal of citizens a variety of recreational opportunities, without removing, in either a theoretical or a practical sense, the provision of recreational facilities from the area of local responsibility.

Government has gone into business without arousing the militant public opposition that might have been expected. Port authorities, housing author-

ities, the Surplus Marketing Administration, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, are examples of venture by government into activities that are as new in form as they are in purpose. Among the greatest and most important changes in governmental function has been the development under Federal and State auspices of assistance to persons or families in economic distress. This service had always been carried on chiefly by local governmental units and often by voluntary effort. In some instances, and in some of the administrative or fiscal phases of the service, the local governments have retained the responsibility for administration; in others, the Federal or State government carries administrative functions, as well as financial support; and in some programs both administrative and financial responsibility are divided in various ways among the three levels of government. But the new characteristic, the most decided change in this part of the American scene, is the extent to which the Federal Government supplies plans, funds, a legislative base, leadership, supervision, and guidance for further extension of these activities. This has been true in a great variety of activities—from public financing to relief, from health administration to highway construction, from education and recreation to slum clearance and low-income housing projects, from resettlement of stranded populations to cooperative farmers' enterprises.

Impressive as the scope of these activities may seem, in view of the billions of dollars of annual expenditure that they represent, a possibly more important effect is that produced upon the points of view and habits of thought of the public. Controversies relating to these activities reside no longer so predominantly in the question of local versus central government as in the realm of opinion concerning proper relations between private enterprise and government in general, the size of government budgets, and the limits of taxpaying capacity.

The coverage of these Federal activities has tended, moreover, to create a new balance between the importance of beneficiary and of taxpayer. The beneficiaries are no longer to be counted in the hundreds of thousands but in the tens of millions. The system of Federal old-age and survivors insurance alone has established a direct relation between the Federal Government and nearly 50 million individual wage earners.<sup>2</sup> Roughly speaking, these wage earners make up a large majority of the taxpayers, if indirect as well as direct taxes are considered, and they are also the preponderant number of the voting population.

The beneficiaries of Federal work projects, the new voters who have been benefited by the National Youth Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps, the beneficiaries of the great and varied system of aid to farmers—all these are as much aware of the increase in economic security represented by these Federal activities as they are of the tax burden which they imply.

<sup>2</sup> *Fifth Annual Report of the Social Security Board, 1940.* Federal Security Agency, Washington, 1941.

It is no longer possible, therefore, to draw the line, as one could even a decade ago, between those who pay the bill and those who are benefited. Government, in addition to carrying on its traditional functions, has become also financier, business executive, insurance company, and relief officer to a large body of citizens and to political subdivisions.

The same compelling changes that have forced Federal and State governments to take on an increasing share in what had been local governmental functions, and to extend and improve them, have also been at work toward substituting trained, competent civil servants for officials selected on the basis of political affiliations. The American public is increasingly recognizing the necessity of having its public activities efficiently conducted, as a very sizable part of the national income goes to pay for the services of civil employees, and the taxes required for this purpose constitute a large and increasing demand upon individual and corporate incomes. The merit system is not only fast becoming a dominant factor in public service, with State, Federal, and municipal bodies being created to conduct and enforce it, but the public is beginning to demand rather than to resist its extension. In addition to public acceptance of the merit system as a legitimate part of the American scene, the organization of the public servants themselves has helped to extend and render it permanent. Associations of civil employees, labor unions, professional and technical employees—all have contributed to the etching of this system deeply into the pattern of the modern American scene.

In the light of these trends—the vast increase in the scope of public services and the changes that are gradually coming into the structure of our government—it is difficult to exaggerate the importance for child welfare and for a growing democratic society, of dealing effectively with the technical problems of government and administration. These problems seem to fall into four principal classes, each of which has been receiving increasing attention in public discussion. They may be designated for convenience as follows: (1) Problems of administrative technique; (2) problems of personnel; (3) relations among the three levels of government; (4) problems of financing—the tax system.

### *Problems of Administrative Technique.*

Administration covers a vast area of details. Bookkeeping and the organization of statistical data constitute a major field of activity. Then there are the relations between numerous Federal Departments and the coordination of their work, the articulation of regional and State divisions of the several departments, the relations between administrative and legislative bodies and between administrative and fiscal authorities, the systems of checking, approval, and audit, the functions of line and staff work, the use of business machines and technical procedures; all these and more are



administrative matters of general applicability. They cannot be imposed, however, in an over-all pattern on all government functions. They must be studied, each within its special setting, and they must be determined by the type of work to be performed and, particularly, by the specific legislative authorization to which they must conform. It follows, therefore, that administrative procedures must be studied, experiments must be carried on, and work must be analyzed not only to discover common basic problems but also to determine the proper application of administrative procedures to different jurisdictions and to different services. In this field, government attains efficiency or becomes dead routine, achieves economical service or becomes public extravagance, succeeds in performing services or makes public service a byword for failure.

The citizen wants to understand these problems and to be patient with inescapable difficulties, but eventually he wants results, in good service and in public economy. The fair-minded critic will recognize that the administrative achievements of governmental agencies, and particularly those of the Federal Government during the past 10 emergency years, justify a pride both in the demonstrated technical skill and in the capacity of the democratic way to rise to the necessity for action and for policy making. Particularly noteworthy are the results achieved in the Federal relief and public-work programs, in the agricultural administration, and perhaps above all, in the organization of the social-security system with its unprecedented amount of detail, its complicated Federal-State relationship, the conditions imposed by regional differences, and the difficulties inherent in the induction of a vast new personnel—all within the time limits imposed by the short period between legislative enactment and actual operation.

“Of all the major institutions of government, the administrative arm,” says Leonard D. White, “has responded most rapidly and most effectively to current exigencies. Our legislative system and our judicial system have hardly altered in the midst of a constitutional structure which has stood the strain well; but public policy and public administration have been profoundly changed.”<sup>3</sup>

### *Problems of Personnel.*

From the point of view of child welfare the axiomatic necessity of having suitable personnel is seen in the first place as applying to two groups of persons: Those who deal directly with the child in the operation of services and those who have general administrative responsibility. Preparation of personnel involves, therefore, technical or professional training such as that of physicians, nurses, teachers, and social case workers, and administrative

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<sup>3</sup> Personnel Administration in the Seventh Decade. *Public Personnel Review* (published by the Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada, Chicago), Vol. 1, No. 1 (April 1940), p. 1.

training such as that of school superintendents, welfare-department executives, superintendents of children's institutions. The employment of personnel lies in the hands of both private agencies and public departments, and therefore employment practices relating to selection, tenure, promotion, dismissal, retirement, salary, and conditions of work must contemplate both public and private employment.

From the standpoint of practice a variety of specialties is involved in the several fields of interest covered by this Conference. The demand for competent personnel reaches into many fields, and questions of training and of standards for personnel practices extend over a wide range: Medicine, law, social case work, education, psychiatry, psychology, public administration.

In the public service, to which this chapter is particularly oriented, two phases of the personnel problem occupy places of principal importance: The merit system and professional training. Both phases have taken on unprecedented importance because of the tremendous quantitative increase of persons in the public service. As of 1938 it was estimated that there were, in round numbers: <sup>4</sup>

Persons under merit systems:	
In the National Government . . . . .	625, 000 <sup>5</sup>
In the State governments . . . . .	160, 000
In local units . . . . .	450, 000
	1, 235, 000
Persons not under merit systems (excluding the armed forces):	
Elective officers, well over . . . . .	1, 000, 000
Teachers, <sup>6</sup> more than . . . . .	1, 000, 000
Legislative, judiciary, boards, and so forth, probably . . . .	200, 000
Federal service, unclassified, about . . . . .	255, 000
States, cities, county, township, and so forth, unclassified, about . . . . .	475, 000
	2, 930, 000
Total, approximately . . . . .	4, 165, 000

The more than a million persons in the classified services of Federal, State, and local governments represent a long history of effort toward the establishment of a merit system, a work which is by no means finished. According to one authority, the early State and Federal appointments were based on merit, and standards were on the whole well maintained until 1829.<sup>7</sup> The present movement for the wide application of the merit system dates back only to the early eighties; it has been accelerated at various times, with the most pronounced expansion coming by way of the ad-

<sup>4</sup> *Fundamentals of American Government*, p. 375.

<sup>5</sup> The figure as of June 30, 1940, was 727,000 (U. S. Civil Service Commission).

<sup>6</sup> Not technically under a merit system, though their selection and advancement are generally based on qualifications and performance.

<sup>7</sup> *Introduction to the Study of Public Administration* (Rev. Ed.), by Leonard D. White, pp. 278-280. Macmillan Co., New York, 1939.

ministration of the Social Security Act.<sup>8</sup> There is an increasing amount of literature on the subject, which on the factual level becomes antiquated as rapidly as it appears, for the extension of the classified merit system is apparently at the highest tempo of its history. There is no need to analyze here the subject of the merit system as a whole, to describe its technical features, or to list its components, which range from salary and tenure to selection, dismissal, and retirement provisions. It is important, however, to record that this Conference favors the extension of the merit system to all parts of the public service that have a relation to children and to recall the growing unanimity of opinion among those in position to know, that both in theory and in practice the system is practicable for the entire field of services for family and child.

It is also important to note that the obstacles and the dangers threatening the merit system are still with us. The most serious of these have been listed as comprising six principal inroads upon the merit system.<sup>9</sup> They are:

1. Inadequate appropriations.
2. Exemption of too many positions from the merit principle of appointment.
3. Preferences accorded to special groups of potential and actual competitors (veterans, incumbents, and so forth).
4. Restriction of appointments to residents of a particular locality.
5. Neglect or deliberate disregard of merit rules in selection and appointment.
6. Tendency to include financial need of candidates along with ability as a basis for personnel decisions.

All these threaten service for the child or his family at one point or another, and the full force of awakened public opinion will be required to guard against their corrosive influence on the administration of services in our democracy.

Merit systems form in a sense the external framework of personnel administration; its essence lies in the qualifications of the personnel and the kind of service rendered. These aspects are of special importance in the fields of interest to child welfare, in which professional services are required and therefore professional training is essential.

For practically every field of child welfare basic professional training is recognized to be necessary, whether the work is to be done under private or public auspices and whether the training itself is offered in private or public educational institutions. There is still, it is true, a remnant of public opinion that does not clearly recognize, nor admit, the professional

<sup>8</sup> For a brief but authoritative résumé see *Civil Service in Public Welfare*, by Alice Campbell Klein, pp. 41-54 (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1940).

<sup>9</sup> *Civil Service in Public Welfare*, pp. 55-76.

nature of preparation required for some of these services. Although everybody agrees that physician, dentist, and nurse must be professionally trained, and, if employed by the public, their qualifications are expected to satisfy the criteria recognized by their respective professions, the axiomatic acceptance of the professional nature of training for teacher, social worker, librarian, recreation leader is less universal. Yet recognition of the professional caliber of training needed by these practitioners goes hand in hand with the method of their selection for service under a merit system, in which fundamental qualifications of training, education, and possibly experience, precede any competitive consideration of specific skills and ranking of candidates. Fortunately both professional recognition and classified competitive merit systems in the public service are progressing apace, and there is every reason for optimism as to the probability of continued progress.

It is with respect to the need for specialized preparation within the respective professional fields that the difficulties are more keenly felt at present, and resistance is less easy to overcome. The field of health will serve as an example. For the administration of public-health services neither the experience of lay executive nor that of general medical practitioner is sufficient. Sanitary engineer, epidemiologist, vital statistician represent diversified specialties within the central field. Special training beyond that which meets the requirements for the M. D. degree and for general practice is required for those who would practice in pediatrics or obstetrics; the management of child-health or maternal-care programs requires a still different combination. Similar situations in other fields are represented by such persons as vocational counselors, medical-social workers, group workers, teachers of retarded children, and so on. Here we see the need for further and more discriminating refinements in the coordination of professional schooling, practice training, in-service training, and advanced specialization. These developments, in turn, can be utilized for better public administration of the services they represent only as they are integrated with the technical progress made in the testing, selection, promotion, and classification of specialists in merit systems. And all this must be articulated with budgets and appropriations, with priorities among the services and with intelligent interpretation to the public, so that public opinion may keep step with public need and technical competence.

#### *Relations Among the Three Levels of Government.*

The political philosophy that inspired the people of the United States to build themselves a democracy has had to be not merely an ideal but also a working guide for practical government. What has made and kept this Nation a democracy is the fact that it has been able to make the philosophy work, to convert an aspiration into a working program. Perhaps

the greatest task of this practical democracy and the most telling test of its success has been the integration into a national political unit of the three levels of government: Federal, State, local. Much thought and study have been given to the problems involved in this form of government, to the stages of evolution through which this tripartite political system has gone, to the significance for democracy of the continuation of the system, together with the changes in detail that time and conditions are demanding. For citizen, for educator of youth, for political leader, the developing problem of democratic government in and among these three functioning levels will require sustained and continuing study.

For the present Conference a more immediate interest lies in the administrative aspects of articulation, supplementation, and adjustment among the three levels. Most if not all the services in the interest of the child to which the White House Conference has addressed itself have been regarded as a local responsibility. They are given by the local community partly through voluntary effort and increasingly through public bodies at the taxpayers' expense. The legal basis for these services has rested in the sovereign state, which for this country has meant, in the light of the Constitution, primarily State government and, by assignment, the National Government.

In recent years State and Federal governments have been participating in the functions traditionally regarded as constituting local responsibility. Has this trend meant changes in the political structure, as some troubled observers and some enthusiasts have thought, or does it represent principally the practical adjustments that a practical people must make lest the capacity of men to live happily together lag too far behind their technological genius for making nature serve their needs and desires? This Conference has made many recommendations that are intended to enlarge the responsibilities of the State and Federal governments in the areas of service associated with local government. It has made these recommendations not because it seeks to alter the political structure in this democracy but because they appear to be in harmony with the general trend of the public will to administer its public services for maximum effectiveness and for the expansion of opportunity for its citizens. Expanded Federal and State participation is being recommended by this Conference in the following fields at least:

- Education.
- Recreation.
- Public assistance.
- Social insurance.
- Health.
- Readjustments in the economic structure.
- Protection of children.
- Removal of inequalities of minority groups.

The methods proposed for this wider participation are those already in operation to some degree in some types of services. They are integrated in legislative and administrative systems that are in daily operation. Some of the forms in which this relationship among the several levels of government appears, in action as well as in recommendation, are:<sup>10</sup>

Financial aid by Federal to State and local governments, and by State to local governments. Such financial aid may be given in a variety of forms, to cover all or part of a given service and on various conditions relating to distribution of funds, to standards, to proportion of sharing, to reports, checks, and audits, to sources of revenue, and so forth. Examples are: Unemployment insurance, aid to dependent children, grants-in-aid for schools and for maternal and child-health services.

Total assumption of a function, as in the case of old-age and survivors insurance.

Research, information, stimulation, advice, educational publicity conducted by Federal offices and supplied directly to the public. Examples of such Federal offices are the United States Children's Bureau, the United States Public Health Service, the United States Department of Agriculture.

Legislative investigations and judicial decisions by State and Federal bodies respectively. The scope of these methods, which are in themselves almost as old as government, naturally increases as the statutory and administrative activities extend the operations of central governments.

For reasons discussed in chapters of this report that deal with the various services, among which the relative financial capacity of the different levels of government is prominent, this Conference has consistently emphasized the importance of further extension of the functions of the Federal Government in aiding, supplementing, and standardizing services to children and their families. The principal objective in this emphasis has been a two-fold one: To raise the standard and level of living for all children; and to remove those inequalities, principally economic, which keep a substantial portion of the children of the Nation from sharing the benefits of American civilization with their fellows. Nation-wide standards of service are seen as requiring nationally defined responsibility, especially in removing economic disability, whether it affects the individual, the family, the local community, or the State. The State, representing lesser financial resources but more direct legal responsibility, is seen as a practical intermediary, in many of these services, between Federal and local governments. Grants-in-aid and appropriations are therefore intended to go chiefly from Federal through State levels. The local government, because of its immediacy to the beneficiary, is regarded as being in a position to handle more effectively the administration of services, with State supervision and help and, as

<sup>10</sup> See *Introduction to the Study of Public Administration*, especially ch. 4.

necessary, with State or Federal financial assistance. The beneficiary—be he child or family—is regarded as being a citizen who has a part, with equal right and reason, in all levels of his government, for he is at the same time a citizen of his community, his State, and his Nation.

### *Problems of Financing—the Tax System.*

In theoretical discussions and in political issues the functions and powers of government may appear as the more obvious concern of citizen and of official; in practice it is recognized that taxes and appropriations are the routine motive power of government. If this is true of government in general it is true above all in public administration. Actual assumption of responsibility, the ability to discharge a responsibility when accepted, the possibility of meeting the needs for which responsibility is recognized—these things tend to become problems of finance and, in the end, problems of taxation.

Whose business might it be to decide whence, how, and how much money shall be raised in public revenues<sup>11</sup> for public purposes? Theoretically it is the business of the citizen. Actually, the citizen has exercised his interest in this fundamental problem as legislator, as executive, as political scientist, and as taxpayer. The taxpayer in this sense has been the *direct* taxpayer whose “rates” were applied to property, income, corporation earnings, business enterprise. The vast body of indirect taxpayers, comprising all consumers, has been and still is relatively inarticulate.

Among the new voices in tax discussions one may now discern the public administrator and technician (school board, health officer, public-welfare administrator), the beneficiary (veteran, relief client, farmer), the citizen-parent, the tax expert. This chorus of new voices is due largely to developments within the last few decades: Expansion of public responsibilities, creation of vast new public services, rise in standards of service, and, generally speaking, the growth of public expenditures beyond anything previously experienced except for military purposes in time of war. Greater meaning has been given to the clamor of these voices because research, analysis, and experiment have shown certain basic weaknesses in the tax structure and possible patterns of reconstruction by which the unprecedented increase in the demand for public funds could be met without a corresponding strain on national resources or on economic stability.

It has been discovered, for example, that—

Property taxes are relatively too heavy and inflexible.

Legal restrictions constrict channels of enlarged taxation by local governments.

Basic resources for taxation are unevenly available in different regions, States, municipalities, and other political units.

<sup>11</sup> It would seem reasonable to use taxes with as much general meaning as “revenues,” even though fines, customs duties, and similar ways of raising public funds are not usually thought of as taxes. In essence they are the same.

The tax burden rests with uneven weight on different groups of people, leading to quasi-confiscatory systems and to unjustifiably favored exemptions.

The Federal Government possesses the widest and most flexible tax bases, a fact in harmony with the growing emphasis on national standards and with the increasing Nation-wide scope of industrial and business economy and public regulation.

Numerous treatises in recent years have examined the facts and principles relating to the tax system and have submitted proposals for reorganization. Some of these have been prepared with the special objective of publicizing ways by which the new or enlarged public responsibilities might be financed and stabilized.<sup>12</sup> A few of the more striking facts disclosed by these inquiries might be profitably contemplated by every citizen.<sup>13</sup> A bare example or two follow:

The total tax bill in the United States for the (pre-defense) year 1938 was approximately 15 billion dollars. It came from the three levels of government in the following proportions:<sup>14</sup>

	<i>Percent</i>
Local.....	34
State.....	26
Federal.....	40

It was spent for the major public purposes as follows:

	<i>Percent</i>
Welfare.....	38
Education.....	14
Highways.....	13
Protection.....	12
All other.....	23

These are descriptive percentages. They tell the proportion actually obtained by the three levels of government and the proportions expended for these purposes. It does not mean that these proportions are necessarily socially sound, economical, efficient, adequate, or financially safe. These figures give no hint as to where more funds could or ought to come from if needed, where the hardship lies, where potential sources are untouched. A comparison of the trends in sources of income (Federal, State, local), of the types of taxes chiefly utilized by each source (property, income, pay roll, and so forth), of the purposes for which the taxes are used (welfare, education, protection), and of the levels of government by which the several services are carried out would raise a number of disturbing questions. For example, are those services which are expanding fastest supported by the type of tax and through the level of government most capable of keeping

<sup>12</sup> Worthy of mention and especially suggestive for this Conference is the monograph, *Federal Aid and the Tax Problem*, by Clarence Heer (Advisory Committee on Education, Washington, 1939).

<sup>13</sup> A brief and lucid presentation is contained in the pamphlet, *You Are a Taxpayer*, by Mabel Newcomer (Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., 1939).

<sup>14</sup> *You Are a Taxpayer*, p. 1 and following pages.



up with the demand? Are the taxpayers from whom given funds are to be raised best able to afford them? Are the sources potentially most capable of providing funds taxed in accordance with that capacity? These and other questions of fundamental importance cannot be discussed here. A few of the general facts may be mentioned, however, for illustration. Some of the principal conclusions that seem to the present Conference to be essential to and in harmony with its recommendations are based on these facts and on their meaning for a future tax system.

The Committee on Taxation of the Twentieth Century Fund<sup>15</sup> reports, for example, that:

"The thousands of local [tax] systems and the State systems are all more or less independent of each other and of the Federal system. The result is a much greater degree of tax decentralization than in any other major nation of the western world. Indeed, the decentralization is so marked that the entire body of taxes in the United States is rarely thought of as one system \* \* \*.

"A tax system that is the same in all parts of the country cannot be expected under a decentralized government. The Federal Government's tax system, it is true, is required by the Constitution to be uniform in the geographical sense. For example, the Federal Government could not set the rate of its gasoline tax at 2 cents a gallon in one part of the country and at 3 cents a gallon in another. The State governments, however, divide the country into 48 different tax systems (49, if the District of Columbia is included). Moreover, a State system is sometimes not geographically uniform. In Arkansas, for example, the rate of the gasoline tax at interstate bridges and in towns near the border is the same as the rate in the adjoining State, regardless of the rate levied in the rest of Arkansas.

"In addition, each of the 175,000-odd counties, cities, school districts, and other local units into which the States are subdivided has its own tax system, but only on sufferance of the State. The units sometimes overlap—for instance, counties and school districts. Only rarely do any two local units have exactly the same tax structure, including the same rates, although all local units depend almost entirely on the property tax in some form.

"As a result of this overlapping, the United States is split up into hundreds of thousands of areas differing each from all the others in the cumulative Federal-State-local tax burden directly applicable to the property of persons within its borders. The 'tax system' of the United States is multi-layered, dual-sovereign, and geographically heterogeneous. This complexity makes it especially difficult to view the system as a whole."

In view of the fact that this Conference recommends financial assistance to localities by States and to States and local units by the Federal Government for a variety of services to be rendered by public bodies that directly or indirectly affect the welfare of the child in this democracy, a certain

<sup>15</sup> *Facing the Tax Problem*, pp. 9-10.

number of conclusions within the scope of the tax system must be stated and emphasized. In the words of the Committee on Taxation of the Twentieth Century Fund, "the amounts now raised by taxation and the amounts that are likely to be demanded in the near future are not beyond the economic limits of taxation in the sense that they would so stifle business initiative and saving that they would be incompatible with an economy based largely on the private capitalistic form of enterprise."<sup>16</sup> The same committee holds that—

"An appreciable amount of redistribution of income, from the more well-to-do to the less well-to-do, is taking place under the existing tax system in the United States. More precisely, there is a redistribution compared with the situation that would exist if government confined itself to those activities that would be unanimously accepted as essential governmental services \* \* \* this redistribution is both inevitable and desirable."<sup>17</sup>

The relation between taxes and services—provided the ultimate resources are available—is, after all, simple. The voter must decide what service government is to provide for the Nation and for the individuals that compose it. If he wants the service he must pay for it. The problem may be briefly summed up in the words of Prof. Mabel Newcomer:

"Looking ahead today, there is no certainty, even with a happy combination of peace and prosperity, that government expenditures will fall at all. The depression has left us a problem of unemployment that may not be completely solved by industrial recovery. We have inherited a large debt and correspondingly heavy interest charges. We have introduced 'social security' and will doubtless expand its scope. We have increased the age of required school attendance in many States, and in other ways are encouraging increased high-school attendance. We are concerned about public health. We are almost convinced that a comprehensive government housing program is needed in order to get rid of our slums. This is in the interests of humanity and health; but if at the same time it should give a much-needed boost to the construction industries, so much the better. Our demand for more and better highways seems to be insatiable. In short, the number of government activities and the standard for these activities continue to climb.

"Do you want these government services? And where would you economize? It is your government and it is for you to decide."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 393.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 400.

<sup>18</sup> *You Are a Taxpayer*, p. 36.

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PART IV  
RECOMMENDATIONS

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## Recommendations of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy

THE recommendations of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy were adopted in full session of the Conference on January 20, 1940, and were published originally in the General Report of the Conference. It was possible at that time to supply only in general and condensed form the supporting evidence upon which the recommendations were based. Through the "Preliminary Statements" issued at a subsequent date a more extended body of data was made available under various topical headings, approximately in the form in which it was submitted for discussion to the several group meetings of Conference members on January 19, 1940, in preparation for the plenary session of the conference. These groups considered the text and recommendations bearing on the various special fields of subject matter dealt with by the Conference as they appeared both in the draft for the general conference report and in the more extended "topical reports" containing the supporting evidence. All the material considered at that time had been drafted by the research staff, reviewed by specialist consultant groups, revised by the Report Committee, and redrafted by the staff.

The present and final report of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, which the Report Committee was authorized by the Conference to prepare for publication, contains practically all the material that had been considered by Report Committee, consultant groups, and research staff in the preparation of the original material for the Conference, as well as a wider factual base for its findings, and a rearrangement and amplification of text deemed necessary to give the report background, unity, and cohesion. While this material provides a better integrated and more compact foundation for the recommendations than was made available in previous publications, the recommendations themselves are the same as those contained in the official General Report of the Conference issued in March 1940.

These recommendations when taken together, the Report Committee believes, form a program of action for the welfare of children to be undertaken not in 1 year but during the coming 10 years—a program that is adequate and appropriate to meet the needs made clear during the 1930's. They cover all phases of child life in all parts of the United States, and they are based upon a wide variety of factual material concerning the major aspects of national life that directly affect children. They are

intended to supplement, strengthen, and improve already existing activities for children, rather than to create new ones, and to expand and extend programs for social security, education, and health along lines already undertaken.

Of necessity recommendations mean proposals that somebody do something, cease doing something, or change the way of doing something. Who is expected to do these things or not to do them? Most of the specific measures sought by these recommendations are governmental measures; they call for the exercise of public responsibility that rests upon the will of the voter, and they are to be financed from public revenues. They require public action and depend upon favorable public opinion for their realization. In a number of the recommendations, no discernible governmental policy or action is involved. The majority do envisage activity and responsibility by public bodies. Of these some are addressed to local governments, that is, town, county, or municipality. Many more involve action by State governments or by the Federal Government. In most instances, two or three levels of government are involved.

Many of the recommendations, although addressed to some body or some agency, public or private, are also general appeals for changes in attitudes or outlook, for conviction and determination with which to vitalize social measures. Even when concrete proposals are made, such as that for grants-in-aid for education, it is not Congress alone that is addressed, but the general public as well, to whose wishes the legislature as representative of the people is expected to respond.

It is no accident, however, that so many of the recommendations are for governmental action. It is a fundamental conviction of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy that public responsibility has been expanding and is bound to occupy a position of importance in the future of American culture far beyond that which it held in the past. It is the conviction of the Conference that this is a necessary consequence of our developing civilization, that it is not detrimental to individual initiative, that it promotes rather than retards democracy, that it is in conformity with the requirements of efficient operation and not necessarily a step toward bureaucracy. It is, moreover, a symptom and a welcome expression of national unity that so large a component of public action is capable of being shared by local, State, and Federal governments.

A careful analysis of these recommendations will reveal, moreover, the fact that few if any of them call for measures that are in any sense novel. They are chiefly proposed expansions and improvements in activities that are already part of our way of life. Only a portion of the recommendations involve legislative actions as distinct from administration, coordination, education, research, and changes in attitudes.

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The recommendations of the Conference, however, do call for action, not complacency; they point out shortcomings as well as achievements. Failure on the part of public leaders of opinion and legislative bodies to press forward along the lines indicated by these proposals would be regarded as certain to result, not in holding the gains of the past, but in retrogression, through neglect of our clear responsibilities for the children of the land.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### The Family as the Threshold of Democracy<sup>1</sup>

1. *It is essential to democracy that self-respect and self-reliance, as well as respect for others and a cooperative attitude, be fostered. These characteristics may be best acquired in childhood if the relationship among members of the family is of a democratic quality.*

2. *The democratic principle should be applied not only within the family but also by the family and its members in their relationships with others within the home and at church, club, place of employment, and elsewhere.*

3. *Parent education should be extended as a useful means for helping to bring about this type of family life.*

### Families and Their Incomes<sup>2</sup>

*The principal objective of sound economic life in a democracy is that people shall be able to earn and administer their own incomes. Opportunity for every family to earn an adequate income is basic to the preservation of the democratic life and to the acceptance of its ideals by American children. The Nation's children, furthermore, must be able to look forward to improving economic conditions for themselves and in turn for their children. A function of government in a democracy is to safeguard the economic opportunities of the families of the Nation. Government also has responsibility for assuring adequate provision of necessary public services to children.*

*To meet the needs of children in their families and in their communities, the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy looks forward to the following objectives in the economic life of the Nation:*

1. *To raise the level of economic activity in the Nation.*

*Improved and fuller use of the Nation's resources, including those workers who are unemployed and seeking work, is basic to a stable and progressive economic life in America. The thinking of the Nation must be directed to the achievement of this goal through research, planning, and sound administration in public and private enterprise.*

2. *To raise the incomes of families of wage earners and low-salaried clerical workers employed in private industry.*

*Efforts to raise family incomes of employed wage earners have been going on for a time long enough to have established channels of action. Legislation to protect the*

<sup>1</sup> See Ch. III, The American Setting.

<sup>2</sup> See Ch. VI, Livelihood. The section on Families and Their Incomes in the General Report of the Conference contains no separate recommendations stated as such. The statement of objectives given here is from the preliminary statements submitted to the Conference. These objectives, in substance, are embodied in the General Report



wage level has gained nationally and in some States. Large numbers of workers, however, are still without such protection. Trade unions have been the wage earners' most direct approach to obtaining and maintaining higher wages wherever organization was possible. It is important that existing measures protecting the wage level be strengthened—

*By extending minimum-wage provisions in the States to include those intrastate enterprises not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act.*

*By developing methods for extending the coverage of Federal and State wage-and-hour legislation.*

*By strengthening legislation which upholds the right of labor to bargain collectively.*

*By increasing the skills of workers through more directed vocational training of young people and the retraining of the unemployed.*

3. *To assure incomes to families of the unemployed.*

*In the present structure of our economy the bulk of the people must find employment in private industry. This imposes upon industry the obligation of providing maximum employment opportunities, as it imposes upon government the obligation of developing a consistent program in relation to industry to make this possible. For some years to come, however, there will be a larger number of unemployed than private industry can absorb. Moreover, there will be industrial fluctuations in the future as in the past, and it is sound public policy to make plans accordingly.*

*Appropriate and adequate work projects should be part of a permanent national policy, adjusted to expand or contract with the fluctuations of private employment. Any national work program should be adapted to the needs of the rural population, as well as the urban population. Part of such a program may provide or expand various types of services administered through existing agencies directly designed to promote the health and welfare of children.*

*Full employment depends on the development of new industrial opportunities. If private enterprise cannot or will not open enough new fields of investment to absorb the unemployed, the initiative for developing new channels of economic enterprise—for example, low-cost housing—should be taken by the Federal Government.*

4. *To raise the incomes of farm families.*

*As the average income of farm families, even when allowance is made for value of produce raised and consumed at home, is very low, measures to raise the incomes of farm families need increased support.*

*Adequate measures for soil and forest conservation should be developed as part of a permanent national policy.*

*Suitable measures to raise agricultural prices should be part of an agricultural assistance program as long as the disproportionate depression in agriculture continues.*

*Services should be developed to assist the migration of families from depressed rural areas where there is no immediate prospect of agricultural rehabilitation*

and to assist migration from farming areas where mechanization is displacing labor.

*Federal agencies to extend agricultural credit and Federal guarantee to co-operative rural credit societies should be strengthened.*

*Assistance to farm families through educational programs in improving farm and home management, consumer purchasing, and family health should be expanded in public schools, adult-education agencies, agricultural colleges, and private citizens' groups.*

*Cooperative enterprises in the provision of community facilities such as stores, gins, processing and storage plants, as well as joint ownership of heavy machinery and pure-bred sires, should be stimulated.*

5. *To strengthen and extend community services to children.*

*To insure adequate services to children, essential public services such as education, health, and social services must be extended, improved, and coordinated. The success of democratic institutions requires continual improvement in local administration. Where meager resources preclude the possibility of local adequacy in public services, especially in those areas where a high proportion of our child population is found, the marked inequalities among communities and States in ability to support services can be diminished through wider application of the principle of Federal and State aid.*

6. *To effect a fairer distribution of the costs of services.*

*As every effort to develop services as well as to initiate new types of economic activity is dependent to a large measure on available revenue and as it is to the interest of all that tax burdens be adjusted to the capacity to pay, consideration and study should be given to the revision of the basic program of taxation, so as to bring it into harmony with the reality of the national picture. This requires that local public services be supported in part out of taxes levied by larger units, particularly by the Federal Government. Facts about taxation should be brought before the public so that action to remedy existing inequalities may be initiated.*

### Families in Need of Assistance <sup>3</sup>

1. *Measures for unemployment compensation, workmen's compensation, and old-age and survivors benefits, which are of special importance in relation to children, should be extended as to coverage and liberalized as to benefits provided, and insurance against loss of income through temporary or permanent disability should be developed.*

2. *The Federal Government should adopt a policy of continuing and flexible work programs for the unemployed, operated and primarily financed by the Federal Government and carried on in cooperation with State and local governments. The amount of work provided in each State should be in proportion to the number of needy unemployed. As supplementary to this program and in no way displacing it, the Federal Government should provide aid to the States for general relief covering all persons in need who are not in the categories now the objects of special Federal concern.*

<sup>3</sup> See Ch. VII, Economic Assistance.

*Federal aid for general relief should be adjusted in each State to the economic capacities and relief needs of that State.*

*3. States should provide substantial financial assistance to local units to make possible adequate public assistance and relief. State assistance should be adjusted to need and financial capacity of the local units.*

*4. Aid to Dependent Children should be further developed with the objective of enabling each eligible family to provide adequate care for its children. Rigid limitations on the amounts of grants to individual children or families should be removed from State and Federal laws. Necessary appropriations should be made by State and local governments and by the Federal Government. Federal aid should be equitably adjusted to the economic capacities and the needs of the several States.*

*5. State laws making legal residence a prerequisite for economic aid should be made uniform and reasonable, with no more than a year required for establishing residence. The Federal Government should take full responsibility for developing plans to care for interstate migrants and transients, such plans to be administered in cooperation with the States but with the Federal Government assuming complete financial responsibility. The States should assume the responsibility for State residents who are without legal local residence, with such aid as may be made available by the Federal Government for general public assistance.*

*6. In all systems of economic aid safeguards should be provided to assure staff, selected on the basis of merit, adequate in number and qualifications to administer the benefits and to provide or obtain for each family the services needed.*

*7. Provision should be made for continued study of the problems of economic need and the operation of the various forms of economic aid in the light of changing conditions.*

### **Families and Their Dwellings<sup>4</sup>**

*1. The Federal Government should continue and expand its program of promoting slum clearance and new housing for low-income groups through further authorization of Federal loans and appropriations for Federal grants to local housing authorities.*

*2. The Federal Government should give attention to rural areas, where half of the Nation's children live. Federal housing programs for rural areas should be adapted to rural conditions and should include grants and loans for construction of new homes and repair of substandard dwellings when their condition warrants, assistance in providing safe water supply and sanitation, and encouragement of electrification.*

*3. State and municipal governments should enact legislation to provide loans and grants for public housing and to authorize cooperation with the Federal Government in housing programs.*

*4. Better housing for families of moderate income should be promoted by safeguarding credit for housing purposes to assure low interest rates and long-term amortization, thus serving to stimulate private building and home ownership; by encouraging cooperative effort of industry and labor to reduce building costs; and by encouraging housing*

<sup>4</sup> See Ch. XIII, Dwellings.

*cooperatives and other agencies in which the motive of profit is subordinated to that of social usefulness.*

5. *Adequate regulatory laws should be enacted, and they should be enforced by competent inspection departments in every city. Such departments should have budgets sufficient for enforcement of laws and regulations concerning construction, management, maintenance, and repair of dwellings, and demolition of buildings when necessary. Local governments should modernize their building, sanitary, zoning, and housing codes to conform to present knowledge of sanitary and other requirements and to eliminate needless cost.*

6. *Public-assistance budgets should include provision for housing adequate for family needs. In each community rent allowances should be based on the rental cost of such housing.*

7. *Continuous research by public and private agencies should be part of housing programs. Appropriations should be made for this purpose to governmental agencies participating in housing.*

8. *Since an enlightened public opinion is essential in housing, as in every other socially important field, citizen committees should be organized in communities to promote public interest, understanding, and support. Housing facts and problems should be made widely known to the public through formal and informal education.*

### Religion in the Lives of Children<sup>5</sup>

1. *Parents, teachers, and others responsible for guiding children should be ever alert to the importance to the child of facing specific life situations. Such situations may provide the occasions for vital and creative religion to function. Adult leaders of children should be persons of the utmost personal integrity and of the highest ideals who have themselves a vivid appreciation of spiritual values.*

2. *Whole-hearted recognition and appreciation of the fundamental place of religion in the development of culture should be given by all who deal with children and by representatives of the press, radio, and motion picture. Religion should be treated frankly, openly, and objectively as an important factor in personal and social behavior. When religion enters normally into the subject matter of courses such as literature, the history of ideas, philosophy, psychology, and the social sciences, the attitude referred to should be maintained.*

3. *Further exploration should be made of the use of religious resources in personal counseling as it relates to the welfare of children.*

4. *Churches and synagogues need to emphasize the common ends which they share with one another and with other community agencies. Religion should be one of the unifying factors influencing the divergent elements that constitute the community. Although they hold to different creeds, the churches should constitute a bulwark against factionalism and antagonism in local communities. Churches and synagogues should recognize their responsibility to the community and contribute to mutual good will and cooperation on the part of all groups by discovering and emphasizing their*

<sup>5</sup> See Ch. VIII, Education: The Schools—Religion.

common objectives, by helping people to understand and appreciate the loyalty of other groups to their own convictions, and by utilizing their resources for the welfare of the community. They should seek every opportunity to cooperate with other community agencies in specific projects which contribute to the welfare of children.

5. Practical steps should be taken to make more available to children and youth through education the resources of religion as an important factor in the democratic way of life and in the development of personal and social integrity. To this end the Conference recommends that a critical and comprehensive study be made of the various experiences both of the churches and of the schools in dealing with the problem of religious education in relation to public education. The purpose of such a study would be to discover how these phases of education may best be provided for in a total program of education, without in any way violating the principle of the separation of church and state. To conduct such a study a privately supported nongovernmental commission should be created which will have on it representatives of national educational and religious educational organizations, and other representatives of the principal religious bodies.

### Educational Services in the Community<sup>6</sup>

1. Units of local school attendance and administration should be enlarged wherever necessary in order to broaden the base of financial support and to make possible a modern, well-equipped school for every child at a reasonable per capita cost.

2. Substantial financial assistance should be granted by every State to its local school systems for the purpose of equalizing tax burdens and reducing educational inequalities.

3. An extended program of Federal financial assistance to the States should be adopted in order to reduce inequalities in educational opportunity among States. Because the minority groups have proportionately more children than others and live to a greater extent in areas with the least resources, the principle of Federal aid to States for services affecting children is extremely important for their welfare.

4. The supreme educational and social importance of individual traits should be recognized throughout the educational system. An educational system that truly serves a democracy will find no place for the philosophy or the methods of mass production.

5. Schools should give increased attention to the educational needs of individual children, including those who are physically handicapped, mentally retarded, or socially handicapped; these needs should be met with minimum emphasis on the handicap.

6. The professional education of teachers should be enriched by study of the principles of child development, the role of education in an evolving social order, and the significance of democratic procedures in school life.

7. Teachers and other workers in all branches of education should be selected and retained in service on the basis of professional qualifications alone. They should be adequate in number to permit them to give attention to the needs of each individual child.

<sup>6</sup> See Ch. VIII, Education: The Schools—Religion.

8. *School systems should provide nursery school, kindergarten, or similar educational opportunities for children between the ages of 3 and 6.*

9. *Local school systems should provide free educational opportunities, in accordance with individual needs, for youth up to 18 or 20 years of age, in preparation for higher education, in basic and specialized vocational training, or in general educational advancement.*

10. *Schools should make available to young people, while in school and after they leave school, systematic personal and vocational guidance and organized assistance in job placement, in cooperation with public employment services.*

11. *School health supervision and health and safety education should be made more effective so as to protect the health of the child and to give him better understanding of the principles and practices of social and community hygiene.*

12. *Schools should assume further responsibility for providing wholesome leisure-time activities for children and their families, and new school buildings should be planned and equipped with these functions in mind.*

13. *Education for civic responsibility should be emphasized with the aim of developing personal integrity and intelligent loyalty to democratic ideals and institutions. For this purpose the child's learning experiences should include participation in the activities of community life, on a level appropriate to his degree of maturity.*

14. *Schools should cooperate with other community institutions and agencies that serve the child. Close cooperation with parents is especially important.*

15. *Research divisions should be established by local school systems wherever possible and by State departments of education. Budgets for the United States Office of Education should be increased to permit the extension of research and related services. Planning of educational policies and programs at all levels should be based on research.*

16. *The traditional concern of American education with ethical values as well as mental and physical development should continue to be the fundamental obligation of the schools. It is desirable that the teaching and administrative staffs should maintain among themselves and in their attitudes toward children the processes and viewpoints characteristic of a democratic society. Such attitudes will thrive only in an atmosphere of freedom to teach and freedom to learn.*

### Leisure-Time Services<sup>7</sup>

1. *The development of recreation and the constructive use of leisure time should be recognized as a public responsibility on a par with responsibility for education and health. Local communities, States, and the Federal Government should assume responsibility for providing public recreational facilities and services as for providing other services essential to the well-being of children. Private agencies should continue to contribute facilities, experimentation, and channels for participation by volunteers.*

2. *Steps should be taken in each community by public and private agencies to appraise local recreational facilities and services and to plan systematically to meet*

<sup>7</sup> See Ch. IX, Education: Leisure-Time Services—Libraries.

*inadequacies. This involves utilization of parks, schools, museums, libraries, and camp sites; it calls for coordination of public and private activities and for the further development of private organizations in providing varied opportunities for children with different resources and interests. Special attention should be directed toward the maximum utilization of school facilities for recreation in both rural and urban areas.*

*3. Emphasis should be given to equalizing the opportunities available to certain neglected groups of children, including—*

*Children living in rural or sparsely settled areas.*

*Children in families of low income.*

*Negro children and children of other minority groups.*

*Children in congested city neighborhoods.*

*Children just leaving school and not yet adjusted to outside life, with special emphasis on unemployed youth.*

*Children with mental, emotional, or physical handicaps.*

*4. Public and private organizations carrying responsibility for leisure-time services should assist and cooperate in developing public recognition of the fact that recreation for young and old requires facilities, equipment, and trained personnel.*

*5. Schools and other educational and civic organizations should promote intelligent choice and appreciation of various forms of commercial recreation.*

*6. Because of the growing significance of radio and motion pictures in their impact on children and youth, social organizations and the entertainment industries, insofar as they are concerned with the leisure time of children, should collaborate wherever possible in order to provide programs that will contribute to the sound development of children.*

*7. A privately supported nongovernmental national commission on recreation should be created to study leisure-time needs and resources and to make recommendations concerning the development of recreation and informal education.*

## Libraries<sup>8</sup>

*1. The States should encourage and assist in the extension and development of local public-library service and give financial aid for the maintenance of such service. In rural areas provision should be made for traveling libraries to reach isolated homes and communities.*

*2. Federal grants to the States for general public education should be available for school libraries. Special Federal grants should be made available for extension of library service to rural areas.*

*3. Libraries should provide for special collections and personnel to serve children. Provision should also be made for material and for library advisory service for parents on subjects relating to child care and training.*

*4. Libraries should be staffed by personnel trained and qualified specifically for this work.*

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<sup>8</sup> See Ch. IX, Education: Leisure-Time Services—Libraries.

## Protection Against Child Labor<sup>9</sup>

The Conference endorses the following requirements, now widely accepted as minimum for protective legislation:

1. *A minimum age of 16 for all employment during school hours and for employment at any time in manufacturing or mining occupations or in connection with power-driven machinery.*
2. *A minimum age of 16 for employment at any time in other occupations, except as a minimum age of 14 may be permitted for limited periods of work after school hours and during vacation periods in agriculture, light nonmanufacturing work, domestic service, and street trades. Determination of desirable standards for legislation governing child actors requires further study.*
3. *A minimum age of 18 or higher for employment in hazardous or injurious occupations.*
4. *Hours-of-work restrictions for persons up to 18 years of age, including maximum hours, provision for lunch period, and prohibition of night work, the hours permitted not to exceed 8 a day, 40 a week, and 6 days a week.*
5. *Requirement of employment certificates for all minors under 18, issued only after the minor has been certified as physically fit for the proposed employment by a physician under public-health or public-school authority.*
6. *At least double compensation under workmen's compensation laws in cases of injury to illegally employed minors.*
7. *Minimum-wage standards for all employed minors.*
8. *Abolition of industrial home work as the only means of eliminating child labor in such work.*
9. *Adequate provision for administration of all laws relating to the employment of children and youth.*

The Conference also makes the following recommendation:

10. *Ratification of the child-labor amendment to the Constitution of the United States should be completed immediately.*

With reference to provision of school facilities as they relate to child labor, the Conference recommends the following:

11. *Compulsory-school-attendance laws should be adjusted to child-labor laws, since school leaving and child labor are closely related. Schooling during at least 9 months of the year should be both compulsory for and available to every child up to the age of 16.*
12. *It is the obligation of the community to provide a suitable educational program for all youths over 16 who are not employed or provided with work opportunities.*
13. *Financial aid from public sources should be given whenever necessary to young persons to enable them to continue their education even beyond the compulsory-attendance age if they wish to do so and can benefit thereby.*

<sup>9</sup> See Ch. X, Employment.



## Youth and Their Needs<sup>10</sup>

1. *Programs of general secondary education based on changes in industrial demands and opportunities, and contributing significantly to responsible citizenship, wholesome family life, constructive use of leisure time, and appreciation of our cultural heritage should be developed.*

2. *Vocational preparation, guidance, and counseling services adapted to modern conditions and the changing needs of youth should be extended in the school systems, and when carried on under other auspices, should be conducted in cooperation with the schools.*

3. *Placement services for young workers should be staffed by properly qualified and professionally trained workers, with full cooperation between the schools and the public employment services.*

4. *Federal, State, and local governments should provide work projects for youths over 16 not in school who cannot obtain employment. Such work should be useful, entailing possibly the production of some of the goods and services needed by young people themselves and other unemployed persons. Civilian Conservation Corps and National Youth Administration activities should be continued and enlarged to serve more fully the purposes for which these agencies were created. There should be further experimentation in part-time work and part-time schooling.*

*No person should be arbitrarily excluded from work programs or other programs for youth because of a delinquency record.*

## Conserving the Health of Children<sup>11</sup>

1. *The health and well-being of children depend to a large extent upon the health of all the members of their families. Preventive and curative health service and medical care should be made available to the entire population, rural and urban, in all parts of the country. A considerable portion of the population is able to obtain from its own resources all or part of the necessary medical service. Another large section of the population, however, consists of families whose incomes are below the level at which they can reasonably be expected to budget all the varying costs of illness without interfering with the provision of other items essential to the family's health and welfare; for these there should be available adequately supervised medical and dental care through a program financed by general tax funds, social-insurance systems, or such combination of methods as may be best suited to local conditions.*

*To achieve these ends will require expansion of full-time local public-health services organized on a city, county, or district basis; construction and adequate support of health centers and hospitals as needed, especially in rural areas, and more effective use of existing medical services and facilities; more effective coordination of community public-health and medical services conducted by various agencies, public and private.*

<sup>10</sup> See Ch. X, Employment.

<sup>11</sup> See Ch. XII, Health.

2. *For all women during maternity and for all newborn infants, complete service for maternity care and care of the newborn infants should be available, through private resources or public funds. Such service involves—*

*Care of the mother throughout pregnancy, including the service of a qualified physician, of a public-health nurse, preferably one with training in obstetric care and care of newborn infants, and of a dentist, and nutrition service and social service when needed.*

*Care at delivery by a qualified physician, aided by a nurse trained and experienced in delivery nursing care, or such care as may be given by qualified and appropriately supervised nurse-midwife services when care by a physician is not available.*

*Obstetric and pediatric consultation service when needed to aid general practitioners in their care of mothers and infants.*

*Hospital care, as necessary, in an approved hospital provided with obstetric and pediatric consulting staff, isolation facilities for infectious patients, and facilities for care of emergency or complicated cases, for transportation, and for social service.*

*After the birth of the child medical and nursing care for the mother in home, hospital, or clinic; supervision of nutrition of the nursing mother; and medical and nursing supervision of the newborn infant.*

3. *For all infants and children preventive and curative medical services should be available, including adequate means for control of communicable disease. These services, financed through private resources or public funds, include—*

*The supervision of health and development of infant and child at stated intervals throughout the period of growth, and care by qualified physician and public-health nurse when needed, at home, in child-health conferences, in schools, and in physicians' offices, including preventive dentistry by qualified dentists for children of preschool and school age and social services as needed.*

*Health instruction in schools and health education of parents in methods of conserving both physical and mental health.*

*More intensive and widespread programs of safety education.*

*Effective nutrition services.*

*Mental-health service when needed.*

*Medical care for sick children in home, clinic, or office of qualified physician. Facilities should be available for expert diagnosis and care of sick children, for consultation by pediatricians in appropriately organized diagnostic and treatment clinics, and for social services as needed.*

*Hospital care, as necessary, in an approved hospital provided with pediatric consulting staff and separate wards for children; convalescent care, as necessary for medical, social, or economic reasons, for children in need of prolonged care to restore health and fit them for family life and community life.*

4. *In the sharing of responsibility for public maternal and child-health services by local communities, States, and the Federal Government, the following principles should be observed:*

*The local community should provide maternity care and health and medical services for children, as needed, as part of its public-health responsibility, utilizing available qualified services and facilities.*

*The State should give leadership, financial assistance, specialized service, and supervision in the development of local services, and should be responsible for setting standards of care and service acceptable on a State-wide basis.*

*The Federal Government should assist States through financial support, research, and consultation service, and should be responsible for setting standards of care and service acceptable on a Nation-wide basis.*

*Federal grants to the States for the expansion of maternal and child-health services, including hospital and medical care, should be made on a basis that will raise most effectively the level of service in those areas where it is not adequate and so reduce existing inequalities in these fields of service.*

5. *In recognition of the fundamental importance of nutrition to the health of children, the President is requested to appoint a national nutrition committee composed of physicians and other scientists, economists, agricultural experts, consumers' representatives, teachers, and administrators. Such a committee should review our present knowledge, coordinate the various efforts now being made to improve nutrition, and point the way toward a national policy in this field.*

6. *A broad program of education to enlighten citizens in all the aspects of the program of health and medical services for mothers and children is a fundamental necessity.*

Because of the primary importance of personnel training and of research, the Conference urges special emphasis on the following recommendations:

7. *In undergraduate professional schools and graduate curricula the training of personnel to develop and carry on maternal and child-health services is a major problem. Special provision should be made for the training of such personnel.*

8. *Particular training should be given to nurse-midwives to prepare them for work in remote rural areas, under the supervision of physicians qualified for this purpose.*

9. *Adequate support should be given to research as well as to direct service through public appropriation and private grants, since research underlies all advance in practical programs of health and medical care, including dental health for mothers and children. The results of research may markedly reduce the costs of care.*

## Social Services for Children<sup>12</sup>

1. *Social services to children whose home conditions or individual difficulties require special attention should be provided in every county or other appropriate area. An obligation rests upon both public and private agencies for the development of adequate*

<sup>12</sup> See Ch. XI, Social Services for Children.

resources and standards of service. This should apply not only to agencies dealing specifically with child welfare but also to any organization whose work affects children.

2. The local public-welfare department should be able to provide all essential social services to children, either directly or through utilizing the resources of other agencies. Public and private child-welfare agencies should cooperate in a program which will assure the proper service to every child in need. Child-welfare services should be based on the following principles:

Public child-welfare services should be available to every child in need of such help without regard to legal residence, economic status, race, or any consideration other than the child's need.

Public-welfare agencies should assume continuing responsibility for children received into their care as long as they are in need of public protection or support.

Children should be given whatever service they need from public-welfare agencies without court commitment, unless change of legal custody or guardianship is involved, or legal action is needed because of the circumstances of the parents' neglect or the child's delinquency.

Public child-welfare services should be provided as part of general public-welfare administration, which should also include aid to dependent children and general relief.

For children who require care away from their own homes, there should be available such types of family-home and institutional provision as may be necessary to insure their proper care, having due regard for special handicaps and problems of adjustment. Child-caring agencies and institutions should have adequate funds for the maintenance of children, and also for such services as are required to meet their physical, emotional, educational, and religious needs, utilizing to the fullest extent community resources available for these purposes.

Where public funds are paid to private agencies and institutions, they should be given only in payment for care of individual children whose admission to service has been approved by the public agency and who remain its responsibility. Such payments should be made on a *per capita*, *per diem* basis, and should cover as nearly as possible maintenance costs. If service is needed by the family while the child is in foster care, there should be a definite understanding between the public-welfare department and the private agency as to which is to render such service.

3. It is the function of the juvenile court to provide legal action based on social study, with a view to social treatment, in cases of delinquency requiring court action and in cases involving adjudication of custody and guardianship or enforcement of responsibilities of adults toward children. As local public-welfare departments become equipped for adequate child-welfare service, juvenile courts should be relieved of cases not coming within these classes.

Courts dealing with children's cases should have judges and social-service staff qualified to give adequate services to children. In the larger communities a probation staff of qualified workers is required. In less populous areas the court may use the services of child-welfare workers in the public-welfare department.

*Social service is needed in connection with court action in cases of delinquency and neglect and in many cases of other types. Social investigation and service, for example, are necessary in cases of divorce and legal separation when custody or responsibility for the support of children must be adjudicated; in cases of adoption, of determination of paternity and support of children born out of wedlock, and of desertion and non-support of families. Where jurisdiction over these cases is not placed in the juvenile court, such service should be supplied either by the court having jurisdiction or through cooperative arrangements with the juvenile court or community welfare agencies.*

*4. The State welfare department should provide leadership in developing State and local services for children and in improving standards of care, and should administer such services as cannot be provided appropriately in local units. It should have a division responsible for promoting the interests and welfare of children and a definite appropriation for this purpose. Besides general promotion and leadership, the service for children provided by the department should include State financial assistance to local units of government to enable them to undertake preventive measures and, when necessary, service to children, and to reduce prevailing inequalities in local community services.*

*5. The Federal Government should enlarge its child-welfare activities so as to make them more fully available to the States, and through the States to local units of government, and to private child-welfare agencies and parents.*

*These activities should include publication of child-welfare information; research; advisory service to authorities and agencies responsible for developing and administering child-welfare programs; leadership and funds for demonstration of service and development of methods of administration; and grants to States for assistance to needy children in their own homes and for such other forms of service to children in need of special protection as experience may prove to be necessary.*

*6. Community, State, and Federal child-welfare services should be developed on the basis of careful planning participated in by health, educational, and social-service agencies, public and private, and by representative citizens. Interdepartmental cooperation in the administration of these programs should be developed by Federal, State, and local governments.*

### Children in Minority Groups<sup>13</sup>

*1. Civic and social agencies, labor and consumer organizations, political parties and governmental agencies, not only should place no obstacles in the way of adequate representation and participation of minority groups both in the ranks and in administrative and policy-making activities, but should welcome and encourage such participation.*

*2. In housing programs financed by Federal, State, and local governments, persons should be given equitable benefits according to need, regardless of race, creed, and color; moreover, programs should be so administered as to assure important minority groups due participation in the development and operation of housing programs.*

<sup>13</sup> See Ch. IV, Children in Minority Groups.

3. *Employers and labor organizations should establish outspoken policies against discrimination on grounds of race and color; antialien bills which exploit race prejudices should be discouraged; practices which limit the suffrage of citizens in minority groups should be corrected; and organizations deliberately exploiting race prejudice should be condemned.*

4. *In the local use of Federal and State grants the same standards should be applied to minority groups as to others, and this should be a specific legislative requirement enforced by public opinion and safeguarded by the right of the individual to appeal and to obtain a fair hearing.*

5. *The kind of protection afforded by fair-labor-standards legislation and certain social-insurance benefits should be provided for those engaged in agriculture and domestic service, occupations which include a large proportion of certain minority groups.*

### Children in Migrant Families<sup>14</sup>

It is recommended that the Federal Government accept responsibility for the development of an inclusive plan for care of migrant families. Such a plan should be based on the following principles:

1. *Financial responsibility for interstate migrants should lie with the Federal Government since local public opinion and existing settlement laws and other statutes deny assistance or community services to many migrant families. In the actual provision of such facilities and services the Federal Government should operate through State and local authorities wherever practicable, but should take direct responsibility for their operation whenever necessary.*

2. *State and local governments should take financial and administrative responsibility for families that migrate within State boundaries. Actually groups of migrant families often include both interstate and intrastate migrants. In the provision of services, therefore, Federal, State, and local governments should work out cooperative plans which will assure the provision of services to families when needed, regardless of where ultimate financial responsibility may lie.*

3. *Government employment services should take responsibility for the orderly guidance of migrant labor in seasonal employment in agriculture and other occupations.*

4. *Plans for the employment of migrant families should take into account the desire for resettlement of those families for which seasonal labor is only a makeshift and whose primary desire is to carry on independent farming operations.*

5. *To deal with the more immediate and also the continuing problems of agricultural workers and their families, which constitute at present the majority of migrant families, it is desirable that measures relating to wages and hours, collective bargaining, and social security be extended as soon as practicable to all agricultural labor, with such adaptations as may be necessary to meet their needs.*

6. *Housing and sanitary regulations should be made applicable to the shelter of migratory and seasonal labor, and adequate appropriations and personnel should be made available to the appropriate agencies to enforce these regulations.*

<sup>14</sup> See Ch. III, The American Setting, and Ch. X, Employment.

7. *Long-range measures that may prevent families from becoming migrants should be introduced both in agriculture and in industry—in agriculture, by such means as preventing soil erosion and soil exhaustion, and helping farmers to meet technological changes and difficulties of financing operations; in industry, by measures to offset technical and economic changes that result in communities being stranded because of permanent discontinuance of local industries.*

### Public Administration and Financing<sup>15</sup>

1. *The number of local administrative units of government for health, education, and welfare should be reduced, and units sufficiently large and appropriate for efficiency and economy in performing the functions of government should be organized.*

2. *Financial responsibility should be shared by governments at the various levels—local, State, and Federal—taking into account the needs in the respective localities and States and the resources of these governmental units.*

3. *Merit systems which will assure competent personnel to perform the services essential for children should be adopted in public administration in local, State, and Federal governments.*

### Government by the People<sup>15</sup>

*Undemocratic limitations on suffrage should be removed, especially when they tend to discriminate against those in low-income groups or racial minorities. Participation in government and the exercise of civic responsibility can then become the clear obligation as well as the privilege of citizenship.*

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<sup>15</sup> See Ch. XIV, Government and Administration.





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## APPENDIXES

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## Appendix 1.—Method Used in Estimating Percentage of Children Living in Families Below Maintenance Level

The calculations made for estimating the percentage of children living in families below “maintenance level” were based on a combination of three studies:

1. *The National Health Survey*, conducted by the United States Public Health Service in 1935, which contains urban data on family composition and income groups. The analysis was based upon a special detailed table provided by the Social Security Board (table 1).
2. The average cost of keeping an average urban family of four on a “maintenance level,” derived from a study under the Works Progress Administration in 1935, published under the title, *Inter-city Differences in Costs of Living, March 1935, 59 cities*.
3. Distribution of incomes in the United States derived from the study under the auspices of the National Resources Committee in 1935, published in *Consumer Incomes in the United States: their distribution in 1935–36*.

The distribution of families of various compositions in urban communities was obtained by a special analysis of the National Health Survey data. In applying the “maintenance level” expenditure standard, which was based on a family of 2 adults and 2 children, a rule of thumb procedure was followed: The average cost of keeping an average urban family of 4 on a maintenance level, \$1,261 per annum, was interpreted as allowing roughly \$400 per adult and \$200 per child. These rates therefore were allowed for families of different sizes, except that for adults exceeding 2 in a family, the allowance made was \$300; and when the family consisted of only 1 adult and 1 or more children, 1 child was treated as an additional adult, that is, as requiring \$300. Thus a family of 1 adult and 1 child was calculated as requiring \$700; 2 adults and 1 child, \$1,000; 1 adult and 2 children, \$900; 3 adults and 1 child, \$1,300; and so on (see table 2, cols. 1 and 5). This standard was applied to a detailed table based on the National Health Survey (table 1), which gives line for line the distribution of incomes for urban single-family households of varying sizes and varying combinations of adults and children.

For each type of family, the "maintenance" budget was calculated by the method indicated in the preceding paragraph. For each line then, an independent calculation was made in order to determine how many families of the given type fell below the margin of maintenance and how many were above. With those falling below the margin were included the families on relief. The next step was to calculate how many children were in the families that fell below the margin of their line. Then the total number of children in these families was compared with the total number of children in all the families surveyed.

In using table 1, one refinement was introduced. The income intervals in the original tables were rather broad, sometimes covering as much as \$1,000. For the purpose of this analysis, smaller break-downs were necessary. These were made by applying to the data of the larger classification of the National Health Survey the internal percentage distribution found to pertain in the analysis given in *Consumer Incomes in the United States*.

Table 1 contains the break-down of urban families by size and composition and by major income groups. Table 2 shows the percentage and number of children who were living in families below the maintenance level. The final percentage derived from these calculations (68.1 percent) was then considered as being applicable to the total urban population.

Since these data referred to 1935, a year of relatively deep depression, a somewhat lower ratio would apply to 1939. It was believed that in 1939 the proportion of children in American cities who were living in families below the maintenance level of living would be less than two-thirds but not less than one-half.

Table 1.—Income Status of Urban Single-Family Households, by Family Size and Number of Children Under 16 Per Family<sup>1</sup>

Family size (persons)	Number of children per family	Income status of family										
		Total number of fami- lies	Relief	Nonrelief								Un- known
				Total	Less than \$1,000	\$1,000- \$1,499	\$1,500- \$1,999	\$2,000- \$2,999	\$3,000- \$4,999	\$5,000 or more		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	
All sizes.....	Total.....	532, 384	86, 380	433, 434	151, 040	121, 137	82, 903	53, 870	18, 133	6, 351	12, 570	
0.....	0.....	288, 295	34, 661	245, 219	94, 469	61, 903	43, 556	29, 934	11, 136	4, 221	8, 415	
1.....	1.....	108, 885	16, 207	90, 388	26, 685	27, 724	19, 102	12, 106	3, 675	1, 096	2, 290	
2.....	2.....	71, 868	14, 069	56, 639	16, 192	17, 919	12, 241	7, 412	2, 209	666	1, 160	
3.....	3.....	33, 934	9, 425	24, 092	7, 612	7, 907	4, 867	2, 734	720	252	417	
4.....	4.....	15, 714	5, 625	9, 930	3, 392	3, 297	1, 883	1, 028	254	76	159	
5.....	5.....	7, 527	3, 239	4, 219	1, 592	1, 417	710	388	91	21	69	
6.....	6.....	3, 718	1, 811	1, 881	700	638	329	171	28	15	26	
7.....	7.....	1, 526	834	679	252	216	134	60	14	3	13	
8.....	8.....	605	344	259	102	80	47	25	5	.....	2	
9 or more.....	9 or more.....	283	165	115	39	34	30	11	.....	1	3	
Unknown.....	Unknown.....	29	.....	13	5	2	4	1	1	.....	16	
1.....	Total.....	57, 284	9, 543	46, 420	30, 466	8, 560	4, 165	2, 109	737	383	1, 321	
0.....	0.....	57, 272	9, 543	46, 409	30, 455	8, 560	4, 165	2, 109	737	383	1, 320	
1.....	1.....	9	.....	9	9	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
Unknown.....	Unknown.....	3	.....	2	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1.—Income Status of Urban Single-Family Households, by Family Size and Number of Children Under 16 Per Family<sup>1</sup>—  
Continued

Income status of family											
Family size (persons)	Number of children per family	Total number of fami- lies	Relief	Nonrelief							Un- known
				Total	Less than \$1,000	\$1,000– \$1,499	\$1,500– \$1,999	\$2,000– \$2,999	\$3,000– \$4,999	\$5,000 or more	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
2.....	Total.....	157, 678	18, 939	135, 446	51, 252	36, 723	24, 614	15, 794	5, 131	1, 932	3, 293
	0.....	153, 083	17, 297	132, 559	49, 188	36, 192	24, 435	15, 722	5, 104	1, 918	3, 227
	1.....	4, 583	1, 642	2, 880	2, 061	530	176	72	27	14	61
	2.....	3	.....	3	2	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....
	Unknown.....	9	.....	4	1	.....	2	.....	.....	.....	5
3.....	Total.....	121, 611	16, 075	102, 542	30, 036	30, 777	21, 604	14, 075	4, 595	1, 455	2, 994
	0.....	44, 778	4, 684	38, 183	9, 966	10, 333	8, 324	6, 205	2, 464	891	1, 911
	1.....	73, 897	9, 957	62, 901	19, 032	20, 195	13, 168	7, 832	2, 114	560	1, 039
	2.....	2, 931	1, 434	1, 456	1, 037	249	112	37	17	4	41
	Unknown.....	5	.....	2	1	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	3
4.....	Total.....	91, 506	14, 438	74, 728	19, 091	22, 439	16, 630	11, 375	3, 900	1, 293	2, 340
	0.....	21, 354	2, 045	18, 195	3, 413	4, 609	4, 313	3, 691	1, 603	566	1, 114
	1.....	15, 986	2, 422	13, 058	3, 265	3, 744	2, 946	2, 133	714	256	506
	2.....	52, 703	9, 083	42, 921	12, 001	13, 991	9, 339	5, 540	1, 580	470	699
	3.....	1, 454	887	551	411	94	31	11	3	1	16
	4.....	1	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	Unknown.....	8	.....	3	1	1	1	.....	.....	.....	5

5.....	Total.....	49,786	10,444	38,059	10,163	11,562	8,300	5,400	1,966	668	1,283
0.....		7,966	773	6,660	1,088	1,572	1,605	1,424	739	232	533
1.....		8,816	1,354	7,093	1,554	2,082	1,709	1,176	422	150	369
2.....		8,351	1,798	6,396	1,775	1,929	1,425	1,877	284	106	157
3.....		24,023	6,066	17,739	5,627	5,946	3,547	1,919	520	180	218
4.....		629	453	170	119	33	13	4	1	.....	6
Unknown.....		1	.....	1	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....
6.....	Total.....	25,974	6,868	18,445	5,078	5,576	3,925	2,618	934	314	661
0.....		2,653	235	2,205	264	474	506	524	307	130	213
1.....		3,647	564	2,903	538	794	728	567	217	59	180
2.....		4,654	1,063	3,463	906	1,037	803	506	173	38	128
3.....		4,062	1,211	2,794	857	894	590	334	85	34	57
4.....		10,656	3,570	7,008	2,463	2,366	1,291	684	151	53	78
5.....		300	225	72	50	11	7	3	1	.....	3
Unknown.....		2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2
7.....	Total.....	13,694	4,294	9,052	2,598	2,819	1,817	1,245	430	143	348
0.....		820	64	699	81	110	155	176	121	56	57
1.....		1,301	185	1,021	162	263	249	208	106	33	95
2.....		2,050	457	1,512	332	471	353	254	77	25	81
3.....		2,499	753	1,689	463	560	377	229	44	16	57
4.....		2,116	790	1,308	416	455	257	136	37	7	18
5.....		4,798	1,953	2,806	1,133	956	425	242	44	6	39
6.....		109	92	16	11	4	1	.....	.....	.....	1
Unknown.....		1	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....

See footnotes at end of table.





10.....	Total.....	1, 892	789	1, 063	296	336	208	147	59	17	40
0.....	15	1	12	.....	5	.....	2	2	3	2	2
1.....	33	4	26	2	6	.....	6	6	7	3	3
2.....	65	9	49	6	12	.....	10	13	7	3	7
3.....	164	37	115	21	29	.....	22	28	1	1	12
4.....	233	60	165	27	50	.....	38	35	12	3	8
5.....	337	126	207	54	63	.....	47	28	13	2	4
6.....	377	176	199	57	77	.....	40	20	3	2	2
7.....	298	169	128	55	41	.....	23	7	1	1	1
8.....	363	202	160	73	52	.....	26	8	1	.....	1
9 or more.....	7	5	2	1	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total.....	2 1, 514	652	837	173	243	192	149	63	17	25	.....
0.....	4	.....	4	.....	.....	.....	1	1	1	.....	.....
1.....	14	.....	13	.....	1	.....	5	3	3	.....	1
2.....	17	3	14	2	3	.....	3	4	2	.....	.....
3.....	57	10	45	3	7	.....	18	5	2	.....	2
4.....	120	32	86	7	18	.....	22	19	.....	.....	2
5.....	193	67	122	18	36	.....	26	20	.....	.....	2
6.....	303	116	181	35	67	.....	39	27	13	2	4
7.....	301	135	160	43	51	.....	40	28	7	5	6
8.....	229	129	99	29	28	.....	21	19	7	.....	6
9 or more.....	276	160	113	38	33	.....	30	17	4	.....	1
Total.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11	11	.....	1	3

<sup>1</sup> Table prepared by Social Security Board from data of the National Health Survey.

<sup>2</sup> Includes 9,945 children.

Table 2.—Determination of the Number of Children in Families Which Are Below Maintenance Level,  
by Size and Composition of Family

Family size (persons)	Number of children per family	Total number of families of specified composition	Total number of children in all families of specified composition <sup>1</sup>	Amount needed for main- tenance (dollars)	Percent of families falling below maintenance level <sup>2</sup>			Number of families below main- tenance level <sup>3</sup>	Children in families below maintenance level	
					Total	In income intervals below that in which main- tenance level falls	In income intervals in which main- tenance level falls <sup>6</sup>		Number <sup>4</sup>	Percent <sup>5</sup>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Total, all sizes	.....	.....	488, 389	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	332, 457	68. 1
2.....	Total..	.....	4, 583	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2, 791	60. 9
3.....	1.....	4, 583	4, 583	700	60. 9	35. 8	25. 1	2, 791	2, 791	.....
	Total..	.....	78, 638	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	33, 627	42. 8
	1.....	72, 858	72, 858	1, 000	39. 8	13. 7	26. 1	28, 997	28, 997	.....
	2.....	2, 890	5, 780	900	89. 1	49. 6	30. 5	2, 315	4, 630	.....
4.....	Total..	.....	123, 802	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	66, 538	58. 8
	1.....	15, 480	15, 480	1, 300	52. 2	36. 7	15. 5	8, 081	8, 081	.....
	2.....	52, 004	104, 008	1, 200	52. 4	40. 6	11. 8	27, 250	54, 500	.....
	3.....	1, 438	4, 314	1, 100	91. 7	90. 3	1. 4	1, 319	3, 957	.....

5	Total	98,742	63.6	59.1	4.5	68,444	69.3
	1	8,447	1,600	59.1	4.5	5,372	5,372
	2	8,194	1,500	43.6	23.5	10,996	10,996
	3	23,805	1,400	49.1	20.5	49,704	49,704
	4	623	1,300	91.8	3.4	2,372	2,372
	Total	68,331	63.6	59.1	4.5	55,400	81.1
6	1	3,467	1,900	54.7	17.2	2,493	2,493
	2	4,526	1,800	66.4	11.4	7,042	7,042
	3	4,005	1,700	73.9	6.5	9,660	9,660
	4	10,578	1,600	79.4	2.7	34,740	34,740
	5	297	1,500	96.3	2.4	1,465	1,465
	Total	45,305	63.6	54.7	17.2	40,379	89.1
7	1	1,206	2,200	71.2	5.1	920	920
	2	1,969	2,100	81.9	1.9	3,300	3,300
	3	2,442	2,000	72.7	15.4	6,453	6,453
	4	2,098	1,900	79.2	10.0	7,484	7,484
	5	4,759	1,800	84.9	5.8	21,580	21,580
	6	108	1,700	99.1	0.4	642	642
	Total	31,370	63.6	71.2	5.1	29,350	93.6
8	1	453	2,500	69.5	10.8	364	364
	2	817	2,400	78.4	8.6	1,422	1,422
	3	1,200	2,300	85.0	4.9	3,237	3,237
	4	1,367	2,200	90.2	2.2	5,052	5,052
	5	1,213	2,100	94.9	0.5	5,785	5,785
	6	2,300	2,000	86.2	9.0	13,140	13,140
	7	50	1,900	100.0	.....	350	350

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2.—Determination of the Number of Children in Families Which Are Below Maintenance Level,  
by Size and Composition of Family.—Continued

Family size (persons)	Number of children per family	Total number of families of specified composi- tion	Total number of children in all families of specified composi- tion <sup>1</sup>	Amount needed for main- tenance (dollars)	Percent of families falling below maintenance level <sup>2</sup>			Number of families below main- tenance level <sup>3</sup>	Children in families below maintenance level	
					Total	In income intervals below that in which main- tenance level falls	In income intervals in which main- tenance level falls <sup>4</sup>		Number <sup>4</sup>	Percent
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
9.....	Total..		17,218						16,302	94.7
1.....	110	110	110	2,800	76.9	52.7	24.2	85	85	.....
2.....	230	230	460	2,700	77.5	60.0	17.5	178	356	.....
3.....	420	420	1,260	2,600	90.8	80.5	9.5	378	1,134	.....
4.....	545	545	2,180	2,500	94.3	88.4	5.9	514	2,056	.....
5.....	667	667	3,335	2,400	94.9	91.5	3.4	633	3,165	.....
6.....	612	612	3,672	2,300	95.9	93.4	2.5	587	3,522	.....
7.....	871	871	6,097	2,200	96.4	95.2	1.2	840	5,880	.....
8.....	13	13	104	2,100	100.0	100.0	.....	13	104	.....

10. ....	Total .....	10, 455	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10, 059	96.2
1.....	30	30	3, 100	69.6	66.7	2.9	21	21	.....
2.....	58	116	3, 000	86.2	63.8	22.4	50	100	.....
3.....	152	456	2, 900	88.8	71.7	17.1	135	405	.....
4.....	225	900	2, 800	91.1	77.8	13.3	205	820	.....
5.....	333	1, 665	2, 700	93.7	87.1	6.6	312	1, 560	.....
6.....	375	2, 250	2, 600	97.2	93.4	3.8	365	2, 190	.....
7.....	297	2, 079	2, 500	98.5	97.0	1.5	293	2, 051	.....
8.....	362	2, 896	2, 400	98.4	97.5	0.9	356	2, 849	.....
9.....	7	63	2, 300	100.0	100.0	.....	7	63	.....
11 or more.....	.....	9, 945	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	79, 565	.....

<sup>1</sup> Col. 2 times col. 3.

<sup>2</sup> In income intervals of the National Health Survey. Includes relief.

<sup>3</sup> Col. 6 times col. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Col. 2 times col. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Col. 10 divided by col. 4.

<sup>6</sup> In calculating within this interval of the National Health Survey, an internal break-down was first made in terms of the finer divisions of the consumer-income survey.

<sup>7</sup> Application of ratio of children in 10-person families to all families of more than 10 persons.

## Appendix 2.—Main Sources of Factual Material Included in Final Report

Publications of the following organizations: <sup>1</sup>

Advisory Committee on Education, Washington.  
American Association of Social Workers, New York.  
American Council on Education, Washington.  
American Public Health Association, New York.  
American Public Welfare Association, Chicago.  
Brookings Institution, Washington.  
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, New York.  
Community Service Society, New York.  
Milbank Memorial Fund, New York.  
National Association of Housing Officials, Chicago.  
National Association of Manufacturers, New York.  
National Bureau of Economic Research, New York.  
National Child Labor Committee, New York.  
National Education Association of the United States, Washington.  
National Recreation Association, New York.  
Public Administration Service, Chicago.  
Russell Sage Foundation, New York.  
Social Science Research Council, New York.  
Twentieth Century Fund, Inc., New York.

Periodicals:

ALA Bulletin. Published by American Library Association, Chicago.  
American Journal of Diseases of Children. Published by American Medical Association, Chicago.  
American Sociological Review. Published by American Sociological Society, Menasha, Wis.  
Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Philadelphia.  
Bulletin. Published by United States Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, Washington.  
Child, The. Published by Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington.  
Child Study. Published by Child Study Association of America, New York.

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<sup>1</sup> Periodicals are included in the periodical list.

- Journal of Home Economics. Published by American Home Economics Association, Washington.
- Journal of Negro Education. Published by Howard University, Washington.
- Mental Hygiene. Published by National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Inc., Albany, N. Y.
- Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly. Published by Milbank Memorial Fund, New York.
- Monthly Labor Review. Published by Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington.
- North Carolina Labor and Industry. Published by Department of Labor, North Carolina.
- Psychological Review. Published by American Psychological Association, Inc., Ohio State University, Columbus.
- Public Personnel Review. Published by Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada, Chicago.
- Research Bulletin. Published by National Education Association of the United States, Washington.
- School Life. Published by U. S. Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, Washington.
- Social Security Bulletin. Published by Social Security Board, Federal Security Agency, Washington.
- Social Service Review. Published by University of Chicago, Chicago.
- Statistical Bulletin. Published by Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., New York.
- Survey Graphic. Published by Survey Associates, Inc., New York.
- Survey Midmonthly. Published by Survey Associates, Inc., New York.
- Survey of Current Business. Published by U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington.

Publications of the United States Government, <sup>2</sup> especially of—

- Department of Agriculture.  
     Bureau of Home Economics.  
     Farm Security Administration.
- Department of Commerce.  
     Bureau of the Census.  
     Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce.
- Department of the Interior.  
     National Park Service.
- Department of Labor.  
     Bureau of Labor Statistics.  
     Children's Bureau.

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<sup>2</sup> Periodicals are included in the periodical list.

Federal Security Agency.

Office of Education.

Public Health Service.

Social Security Board.

Federal Works Agency.

United States Housing Authority.

Work Projects Administration.

Interdepartmental Committee To Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities.

National Emergency Council.

National Resources Planning Board.

White House Conference on Children in a Democracy.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See complete list on p. ii.











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